

**HANDBOOK
TO THE
CAMBRIDGESHIRE SYLLABUS
OF RELIGIOUS TEACHING
FOR SCHOOLS**

SENIOR SECTION

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BY

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PREFACE

THE Cambridgeshire Education Committee on the completion of the new *Syllabus of Religious Teaching for Schools 1939*, asked the Institute of Christian Education to undertake the production of a Handbook for use with it. The Advisory Committee which prepared the *Syllabus* had expressed the opinion that while it was not part of their responsibility to provide detailed guidance in the use of the *Syllabus*, many teachers would desire the help a Handbook would give. The following persons, half of whom had shared in the production of the *Syllabus* as members of the Cambridgeshire Advisory Committee, were invited by the Institute to form an editorial group to advise in carrying out this work: the Rev. G. A. Chase, Master of Selwyn College (Chairman); the Rev. A. W. Harrison, Principal of Westminster Training College; the Rev. Hugh Martin, Managing Director, S.C.M. Press; Miss L. Preedy, Advisory Teacher, Cambridgeshire; the Rev. Kenneth Riches, Chaplain of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge; Miss A. H. Skillicorn, Principal of Homerton College, Cambridge; Miss J. E. Sladden, Secretary, Institute of Christian Education; Dr. Tissington Tatlow, Honorary Director, Institute of Christian Education; H. Tomlinson, Esq., Headmaster, Sexeys School, Blackford, Wedmore, Somerset; Dr. Basil Yeaxlee, Lecturer and Tutor in the Oxford University Department of Education.

The main lines of a Handbook to accompany the Senior Section of the *Syllabus* having been agreed upon, Dr. Basil Yeaxlee was invited to write it. Later

the Committee discussed part of the manuscript with the author and finally approved the book as a whole before publication. They desire to express their warm appreciation of the *Handbook* he has written, which they believe will be of great value to all who use the Cambridgeshire *Syllabus*.

The *Handbook* is neither a book of lesson notes nor a detailed commentary. Its purpose is to supply background material and to help to bring out the cumulative effect of the different parts of the *Syllabus* from the educational and religious standpoints. *It is a supplement to and not a substitute for the agreed Syllabus.*

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THE STANDPOINT AND PURPOSE OF SYLLABUS AND HANDBOOK

CHRISTIANS are the people of a Book. The Bible, and within the Bible the New Testament, sets forth the facts upon which their faith is based. These have been taught to successive generations ever since the first disciples knew Jesus of Nazareth. We cannot enter into their experience unless we know the story of Jesus and the primitive Church as it is told in the Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles. But Christianity, while based upon this knowledge, is a living relationship with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, a way of life which Jesus exemplified and which men can follow only as they share His mind and spirit. Christians are people who worship and serve God as they know Him for themselves in and through Jesus Christ. The Christian Church is the community of those who thus in greater or less degree can truly say with Paul and Augustine, Francis and Luther, Wesley and Newman, Livingstone and Schweitzer, that they know Jesus Christ and the power of His Resurrection. Jesus Christ dominates their lives, and their daily business is to carry on by word and deed this continuous witness to the supreme truth about God and men (cf. 1 John i. 3). That is how Christianity has been perpetuated as a living religion. That is why the New Testament was written. The earliest summary of it all is found in three words, *Jesus is Lord*. This was the first Christian creed, the affirmation required when anyone sought admission to the primitive Church. (See pp. 251, 275.)

Consequently, in this course of religious teaching, we begin with the earliest Gospel, Mark, upon which, with the collection of sayings of Jesus known as Q, Matthew and Luke were built up. There is no MS. of Q. It is arrived at by ascertaining what Matthew and Luke have in common after the passages which they owe to Mark have been distinguished. The aim of the writers and editors of the first three Gospels was not simply to preserve historical records, but to nourish and inspire a missionary Church. The Gospels were the manuals of preacher and teacher in carrying their message from one land to another and from one generation to the next.

Our business in religious teaching is the same. We are required, and rightly, in schools provided and maintained by the State, to be non-sectarian: we are allowed to teach "no religious catechism and no *religious formulary distinctive of any particular denomination*" (Education Act, 1921, Sect. 28 (2), embodying the Cowper-Temple Clause of 1870). But the period in which the teaching is given is invariably described as one of "*religious instruction*," and it is clearly meant that children should be enabled to learn the elements of Christian worship, belief and conduct as these are contained in the New Testament and accepted by all Christian Churches. (See pp. 217, 252.)

On the other hand, we must, if we are to be loyal to the principles and traditions of sound learning, as well as of honest teaching, be objective, as the Spens Report (pp. 208 ff.) maintains: "No boy or girl can be counted as properly educated unless he or she has been made aware of the fact of the existence of a religious interpretation of life. The traditional form which that interpretation has taken in this country is Christian, and the principal justification for giving a place in the curriculum to the study of the Scriptures

is that the Bible is the classic book of Christianity and forms the basis of the structure of Christian faith and worship. . . . We hold that the Biblical literature contains a body of perfectly intelligible ideas, which can be systematically presented and studied; and that it is possible for a teacher so to approach that literature and present those ideas that the difficulty of appearing to take sides in traditional controversies may be avoided. . . . The approach to the study of Scripture which we have in mind is historical and objective, the temper and the method of the teaching being such that the teacher's primary purpose will have been attained when he or she has made the pupil understand the meaning of the book which is being studied; and by 'meaning' is to be understood the meaning, as far as it can be ascertained, for those who wrote the book and for those for whom it was written." This does not preclude discussion with pupils of the questions which they are certain to ask as they acquire knowledge of the facts, and "it can hardly be disputed that the best teacher is one whose interest in the subject and desire to teach it proceed from religious faith." But the Scriptures can be taught and the historical divergencies in Christian thought explained "without incurring the suspicion of insincerity or prejudice—personal or denominational."

The Spens Report was not published till after the Cambridgeshire *Syllabus* had been completed and signed, but the representative committee of teachers from the area, Anglican and Free Church scholars, and officers of the local education authority were at one throughout in affirming and working upon precisely these principles. The aim was to present in teachable outline what sound scholarship shows to be the essential contents of the Bible. The Old Testament was set in the light of the New. The living connection

between Christianity then and now was indicated by a brief series of suggestions, historical in character and manifesting unity of spirit in diversity of operation. Optional courses on how the Bible grew and what is the faith held by all Christians were provided for the last year of school life. It was regarded as axiomatic that each teacher must be free to use the material as his own conviction and professional obligations demand, just as his methods are determined by his own training and experience.

From this standpoint the *Handbook* has been written. It is meant as an aid to the teacher in ascertaining "the meaning, for those who wrote the books and for those for whom they were written." Its aim is to elucidate the *Syllabus* (see Preface), and to supply information at points where the teacher might otherwise find it necessary to dig among more academic works in order to ascertain the facts or discover the general trend of scholarly opinion. References to authorities are made so that teachers may pursue the study further if they wish, and the books mentioned ought to be accessible in school, borough or county libraries. Among these *A Companion to the Bible* (T. & T. Clark, 12s. 6d.) may be mentioned as containing all the additional material that the non-specialist teacher is likely to want, and as certain to be the standard book of reference for some years to come.

As far as possible, repetition has been avoided in the *Handbook*, but as, in some cases, the same topic recurs in the *Syllabus* and has to be handled differently, cross-references have been inserted so that the teacher may quickly find all that has been said on it. Full use should be made of the Index. The Scripture references will be found to shed further light on the themes under consideration and should be looked up in the *Revised Version with Revisers' Notes* (Bible Society, 2s. 6d.).

THE FIRST AND SECOND YEARS' WORK

THE problem of the teacher in dealing with the Bible is threefold. There is a story, a clear historical thread, running through it and giving coherence and meaning to it: the pupil must be helped to lay firm hold of this. There is an immense amount of detail, and much repetition with variety of emphasis or setting: the pupil must be enabled to understand how this enriches the story and its meaning. There is rapid development in the pupil's own powers of study and understanding throughout the years 11+ to 16+, till intelligence reaches its maximum in about the sixteenth year: this must be taken into account in teaching.

These facts necessarily influence deeply the practical questions of how the material is to be handled as a whole and how individual lessons are to be worked out. The simple method of spreading the story over four years will not do, because psychological considerations will impel a good teacher to frame lessons in the first and second years on lines quite different from those which are natural and necessary in the third and fourth. To begin the story at 11+ and end it at 16+ would therefore result in distorting the story itself, since the successive parts would be set forth on different scales of treatment in respect of local colour, factual detail, connection between events, analysis of character, growth in religious and moral ideas, significance for present-day life and thought, and so forth. On the other hand the old "concentric" method, by which in each school-year, from the age of five onwards, the same ground-plan was used, with a gradual inclusion of more and more detail, has long been proved a failure.

The New Cambridgeshire *Syllabus* is an attempt to surmount all these difficulties by the selection and arrangement of the material in such a way that, during the senior period, the central thread is traced three times, but in each case from a different point of view. This is by no means a return to the "concentric" method, which only picked out topics because of their theological importance and made no attempt to throw the contours of a two-thousand-year story into relief. Professor Dodd, in *History and the Gospel*, rightly says that the story in the Bible is never just story: it is always "event plus meaning." The outline for the first and second years in the senior school brings out the events in their sequence, but not without revealing the simpler aspects of their meaning. Then in the third and fourth years greater attention is paid to the meaning, but still in close relationship to the order of the events. The first two years' work should make pupils familiar with the outstanding personalities in the story—and above all, of course, with the Jesus of the Gospels as central to it all—but even at that stage these personalities should be apprehended as something more than isolated individuals and something more than "types": their supreme importance was that in and through them the people of God were enlightened, saved and led. For that reason only major incidents in the life of each are selected for study, so that we pay attention only to those things which explain most effectively why these men were what they were, and how they influenced the people of their respective times. Furthermore, by choosing a minimum rather than a maximum number of events from the life of each the main lines of the great story in which they all played distinctive parts can be kept clearer, and due attention can be given to the background—literary, historical, archæological and the rest.

FIRST YEAR: II +

I. ST. MARK AND ACTS I-IV

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK

The earliest Christian preaching is summarised in the words of Peter (Acts ii. 36, x. 36): "God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified." Mark's Gospel gathers together what first-hand witnesses like Peter proclaimed concerning Jesus in a world where there were "gods many and lords many" (1 Cor. viii. 5), but the Jews believed that there was only one God, who would send His Messiah (a glorious being, but not divine) to establish the Kingdom of God in the earth (see *Syllabus*, note, p. 40). "Messiah" and "Christ" both mean "anointed one." The TITLE (i. 1) shows the standpoint from which Mark wrote. Possibly (R.V., marg.) the words "Son of God" were not in the original manuscript. The whole book, however, not only declares that *Jesus is Lord*, but answers the questions such preaching would evoke—"Why do you call Jesus 'Lord'? How is He different from the Lord Serapis or the Lord Mithras?"

Mark does not begin his NARRATIVE on the note of dogma. In this respect he is restrained throughout. This may be because he is at pains to show how the Messiahship of Jesus was kept secret till the very end of Jesus' ministry (cf. *Syllabus*, p. 49, "The Messianic secret is out"). Or it may be that he faithfully reproduces the development of the disciples' experience, as very gradually they came to see in Jesus more than a teacher and leader. He does not hesitate to tell how blind they were, and even how perverse. Only partially, until after the Resurrection, did even Peter perceive

who and what Jesus was (cf. Mark viii. 29-32, ix. 4-6, xiv. 27-31; Acts ii. 36, x. 36).

This makes Mark a particularly good basis for teaching boys and girls, since it enables them to appreciate vividly the experiences of those first disciples, and thus to discover for themselves the meaning of the later apostolic preaching and of the enduring faith of the Christian Church. Theology is then rightly seen to be the attempt to explain intellectually what can only be fully experienced in a living religion of devotion and obedience.

The purpose of spending so much of the first year in the senior school upon Mark is more than that of summarising and filling out the story of Jesus which children have already learned in the junior school, or even of supplying a standard by which the religious ideas in the Old Testament may be properly understood and the whole Bible thus brought into perspective. The aim is that from the start pupils should see why Christianity exists at all, and how the first Christians came to say "Jesus is Lord." Mark is a dramatic narrative of actual events in Palestine 2,000 years ago which proved a turning-point in the history of the whole world. The background is graphically described by Basil Mathews in *The World in Which Jesus Lived* (O.U.P., 2s. 6d.), and more briefly by Raven in *The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ* (C.U.P., 3s. 3d.). The first lesson or two should help pupils to see this picture clearly, so that they may approach the story with some idea not only of how the Old Testament culminates in the New, but also of how the three great civilisations, Hebrew, Greek and Roman, met in Palestine in Jesus' day. They should also consider who Mark was, why he wrote his Gospel, and what material he used. Useful Commentaries are Blunt's *St. Mark*, "School Clarendon Bible" (O.U.P., 2s. 6d.),

and his fuller volume in "The Clarendon Bible" (O.U.P., 5s.).

Prologue. The Coming of the Christ: Mark i. 1-15.

The story begins abruptly as compared with the more elaborate introductions to the other three Gospels. But Mark writes as Peter preached—straight to the point. Moreover, he starts where the actual experience of Peter and John and the others must have started. They probably knew nothing of Jesus till He came, an unknown young man from humble surroundings in a village far distant from the centre of Jewish political and religious life, to unite Himself with the most radical religious reform movement of His time. What distinguished Him from others, as they soon discovered, was a deep consciousness of His relationship to God and of the special mission which drove Him to say and do things that soon arrested popular attention and attracted young men to Him as their leader. But He appears first in the setting of John the Baptist's challenge to conventional religion and current morality.

The Forerunner: i. 1-8.

JOHN THE BAPTIST, in personality and character, recalls Amos, and his message is like Micah's, "Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly." There had been no great prophet in Israel for 400 years. John strikes the authentic note again; religion and morality must go together. But he adds the expectation which had grown up since the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, the oppressor, and Judas Maccabæus, the deliverer (see p. 142). God will send His emissary, clothed in power and glory, to overthrow evil. But men must be prepared, and this means change of heart, a new way of living.

The Witness of the Spirit: i. 9-11.

All this Jesus knew from His study of the Scriptures (Luke ii. 47).

He was convinced that the time had come. What was He Himself to do about it? The first step for Him clearly was to identify Himself with this prophetic revival led by His cousin John. Thus He would link Himself with all that God had wrought for and through Israel since He called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, and with all that God would now do for the salvation of men.

Baptism, for John's hearers, symbolised repentance and cleansing, entry upon a new life. Baptism for Jesus would surely represent self-dedication to His new work. Acceptance of it implied neither that He was conscious of sin nor that till then He did not possess the Spirit of God. Committing Himself publicly to the cause of the Kingdom of God, He received inward confirmation of His certainty that God was indeed His Father, with whom His fellowship was unmarred. Mark says that the vision and the voice were seen and heard by Jesus only. Later Gospels heightened this. The dove may have been actual; if so, it provided an apt symbol: the voice was surely that with which God speaks in the hearts and consciences of all His children.

The phrase "SON OF GOD" had a long history (cf. p. 19). In the Old Testament "son of" frequently indicates "close association with" (e.g. 1 Sam. xxv. 17; Prov. xxxi. 5, 8, R.V. marg.), and the phrase is applied both to human and to angelic beings (Job xxxviii. 7). In the New Testament Jesus is spoken of as *the* Son of God, uniquely related to the Father, a phrase which asserts the Christian faith but does not and cannot give a full and final explanation of it. What the story tells us is that Jesus now knew beyond

question that He was the expected Messiah, sent, not only to proclaim the Kingdom, but to bring it in. This was THE "MESSIANIC SECRET" (see *Syllabus*, p. 48). It could be revealed only to those capable of understanding it aright, since otherwise prevailing ideas about the Messiah, half magical and half political, would be attached to Himself and His mission: people would welcome and acclaim Him for the wrong reason: such a misunderstanding would hinder His fulfilment of His task. THE KINGDOM OF GOD means the rule or sovereignty of God rather than the community or realm over which He reigns (see C. H. Dodd in *Parables of the Kingdom*, Nisbet, 7s. 6d.).

How was He to set about the discharge of this mission? As so often later, He sought solitude—possibly the wilder parts of the Jordan valley—for prayer and reflection. He was under strong constraint ("driven") because His spiritual certainty raised problems of action. The nature of His questionings and conflicts appears in the later Gospels (Luke iv. 1-13; Matt. iv. 1-11. See p. 164).

The Temptation: i. 12-13.

SATAN: Jesus necessarily used the language and thought-forms of His time, or He would not have been understood. During and after the Exile the conception of angelic and demonic spirits had developed greatly among the Jews as a result of contact with Persian religion. In the Book of Job (*circa* third century B.C.) "the Satan" appears, not as a fallen spirit, but as one of the "sons of God" whose business is to test the genuineness of the perfect and upright man. In the time of our Lord a more sinister conception prevailed (cf. Mark iii. 23). Two questions arise: (1) Did Jesus believe in an actual, personal evil being over against God, or (2) if in fact there is no such being, but Jesus

used current imagery to convey the reality of inward conflict, whence did that conflict spring for Him, and whence does it spring for us?

It is unwise to dogmatise, if only because the whole question of the nature of sin is involved. (On this, as upon the existence of angels, see the Archbishops' Commission Report on *Doctrine in the Church of England*, pp. 46-7.) Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. iv. 15). In ourselves and our environments there are energies and influences which are not in themselves evil, but which may have to be resisted or transformed if we are to be loyal to the highest standards and purposes we know. These have not seldom been personified as "Satan" (cf. Jesus' words to Peter in Mark viii. 33, and His clearly metaphorical utterance in Luke x. 18). To the very last, Jesus had, like other men, to endure temptation (cf. Luke xxii. 28), but He came out of this experience strengthened for the beginning of His ministry.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God: i. 14-15.

The Fourth Gospel shows that Jesus spent perhaps a year IN JERUSALEM AND JUDÆA before He began His public ministry in Galilee. Mark passes this over and characteristically presents Jesus as taking up and developing forthwith the proclamation and challenge uttered by John (now imprisoned by Herod: i. 14).

PART I. THE MINISTRY: i. 14-x. 52

A. *The Public Ministry of Word and Deed in Galilee: i. 14-vi. 56*

1. *Work and Conflict: i. 14-iii. 35.*

These stories show how men were constrained by everything that Jesus said and did to recognise Him

as Lord (cf. p. 251). He spoke and acted with complete independence, whereas the Prophets' constant prelude to all their utterances had been "thus saith the Lord," while Scribe and Pharisee based all their statements and demands upon the Scriptures—"it is written"—or upon the traditional explanation of these. He called men to follow Him and they left all to do so. He evoked the faith of sick people and they were healed at His word or by His touch. He set the truth about God and men in an altogether new light, and it was accepted. Authority (*exousia*—something original and belonging to the nature of things) and power (*dunamis*: cf. English, "dynamic"—possessed of intrinsic energy and initiative) characterised His words and works, which were indeed the Kingdom in action. But His was "power in subordination to love."

Graphic details, gained from the Gospels themselves and from what we know of manners and customs in Palestine at that time, will help pupils to understand WHAT KIND OF MEN JESUS CHOSE—not influential, wealthy or learned folk, but men of the people, yet each with his marked characteristics and gifts. For the local colour see Basil Mathews' *Life of Jesus* (O.U.P., 7s. 6d.) and Entwistle's *Bible Guide Book* (S.C.M. Press, 6s.).

We are confronted at once with MIRACLE STORIES. Mark's pictorial style, revealing what Jesus was by recounting concrete illustrations of what He did, brings these stories together in quick succession. Mark is less concerned with chronological detail than bent on bringing out the impression that Jesus made. He recounts typical instances and may even sometimes mass them together (e.g. i. 32-4).

We cannot satisfactorily deal in class with individual miracle stories unless we have given careful thought to the subject as a whole: then we can handle a particular

story, and deal with pupils' questions firmly, without sacrificing either conviction or openness of mind.

If all the miracle stories were removed from the first three Gospels, the narrative would fall to pieces and much even of what was said against Jesus would lack explanation (Mark iii. 22; John xii. 19). Historical and literary considerations may indeed lead us to regard certain miracle stories as elaborations of quite ordinary happenings, or as later and unhistorical interpolations. We can trace the process whereby some of the stories told in Mark were elaborated by other writers, and in one or two cases it seems that what was probably uttered as a parable was subsequently taken as an account of a miracle (e.g. the cursing of the barren fig-tree, Mark xi. 13-21; cf. Matt. xxi. 19-20; cf. with both, Mark xiii. 28; Matt. xxiv. 32). But the stories in the New Testament are marked by great restraint as compared with those in the Apocryphal Gospels (such as that of Jesus, when a boy in the carpenter's shop, putting straight by a touch a piece of work which Joseph had bungled, or of Jesus striking His child companions dead when He was angry with them). These Gospels were in circulation during the second and third centuries A.D., but were rejected by the Church when the New Testament books as we now have them were finally recognised as authoritative. They may be read in M. R. James' translation, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (O.U.P., 10s.).

Jesus refused to work miracles in order to convince the sceptical (viii. 11-21), to captivate popular imagination, to test God's power (Luke iv. 9-11), to appeal to material interests among a people suffering much poverty (Luke iv. 3-4), or to test His own supernatural capacity (Matt. iv. 3). In His day miracles were accepted as "signs" of special relationship with God or the gods (cf. O.T. miracles, the healing wrought by

Apollonius of Tyana, and the requests made by the Pharisees and people, Mark viii. 11; John vi. 30). Nor would He work them to save Himself (xv. 29-31). As His ministry proceeded, and He found the people more eager for miracles than concerned with His supreme purpose, He seems to have avoided as much as possible occasions when, as in His earlier ministry (iii. 10), multitudes pressed upon Him to be healed.

Jesus lived in an unscientific age, when much was accepted as miraculous that we should regard as coincidence or should explain in the light of modern psychological treatment. But this must not be pressed too far. It does not explain the stories of Nature miracles or of the raising from the dead (see pp. 24, 35). Nor will rationalisation—as, for example, the suggestion that the widow of Nain's son was not actually dead, or that Jesus walked *by* and not *on* the sea. To confess doubt as to the historicity of a particular story or inability to explain it in terms of modern science is better for the pupil, and certainly more honest on the part of the teacher, than to wriggle out of apparent unorthodoxy by some transparently thin "explanation" which any intelligent boy or girl will see through and privately ridicule.

The real issue lies deeper. In what sense was Jesus Lord of human personality and even of natural process in the world of inanimate Nature? His spiritual unity with God and the perfection of His human nature might well make possible many things beyond the power of maladjusted human beings such as the best of us are. Modern physics and modern psychology have thrown new light upon the relationship of matter, mind and spirit, and the control of one by the other. But even they deal with strictly limited aspects of human experience.

The mission of Jesus was to manifest the eternal order

within the temporal. His concern was with the bringing in of the Kingdom of God, which, in an ordered universe, touches the body as well as the mind and spirit of a man. He looked upon "miracles" as manifestations of the power of the Kingdom (Luke xi. 20). But He required of men the response of faith—not credulity, or the suppression of reason, but active confidence in the wisdom, love and will of God. Mark frankly says (though Matt. xiii. 58 waters the statement down) that in a certain place Jesus could do no mighty works because the people lacked faith (vi. 5-6), just as he quotes cases in which the faith of some proved effective for the healing of others (ii. 5, v. 22-4, 35-6). In Jesus the body and, indeed, matter itself were instrumental to the spirit, and were sacramental, since spiritual energy could be expressed through them (xiv. 22-4, i. 31, v. 41, ix. 27). In all this it must not be forgotten that if God was in Christ in unique degree, and if Jesus was raised by the power of God from the dead, there was something in His divine-human person beyond our explaining. He Himself *was* the miracle, though He was utterly and completely man.

Obviously we cannot attempt to convey all this to eleven-year-old boys and girls. It will be relevant to the questionings of fifteen- and sixteen-year-old pupils. But even at this point the teacher must think the matter out on these or other lines if he is to be free and happy in considering the miracle stories with the younger boys and girls. See special Note in *Syllabus*, pp. 125-8. Reference is suggested to such books as *Doctrine in the Church of England* and Professor H. H. Farmer's *The World and God* (Nisbet, 10s. 6d.). A most useful pamphlet, *Suggestions on the Teaching of Miracles*, is published at 6d. by the Institute of Christian Education.

It is probably best to say quite simply to them that these stories are in the Gospel, and that the purpose of

study is to find out first and foremost what they meant to the writer and to those for whom he wrote. Something can profitably be said about the healing of physical symptoms by mental treatment, the description in the Gospels of obsessed or paranoiac folk as "possessed of demons" (noting the tendency at that time to regard all disease as the punishment of sin or the work of evil spirits), and the fact that the significance of a "wonderful work" depends, not upon its being wonderful, or even unique, but on why it was wonderful and what it was meant to achieve. Jesus sought to make people whole, and therefore to deliver them from everything that marred or prevented wholeness, whether sin, disease or fear, so that they might live wholly, freely and happily in the love and service of God. Thus physical restoration or the assurance of physical safety might be the least part of what He did for them, though onlookers might think it the most striking and important. On the other hand, restoration of confidence and courage might bring with it bodily health and triumph over physical deprivation and danger. The distraught people recognised this and were quick to perceive His power.

This prepares the way for discussion of those particular miracles which, as Jesus Himself indicated, hinge definitely upon *moral and spiritual relationships between God and men*, such as the forgiveness of sins (ii. 1-12).

In the two HEALING MIRACLES recorded in this section Jesus used means intended, no doubt, as an aid to faith, just as on certain other occasions He commanded the sick person to *do* something requiring a little effort, or implying undoubting acceptance of His healing word (e.g. i. 44, ii. 11, and v. 19). On the Pharisees' demand for a sign, see pp. 22 f.

The story of the man healed on THE SABBATH DAY has, like that of the rubbing and eating of corn, a

special significance. During the Exile the strict keeping of the Sabbath had been one of the means by which, away from Temple and sacrifice, the Jews maintained their hold on their religion. After the Exile, special stress was laid upon it (cf. Gen. ii. 1-3) because of their tendency to relax religious observances when they were no longer constantly challenged by a heathen environment. One of the chief charges against Jesus was that He encouraged the breaking of the Sabbath. What He taught, however, was that the worship of God is not only man's duty, but the secret of human well-being, and that the Sabbath is God's gift, intended as a blessing and not as a burden. "SON OF MAN" (cf. p. 37) is a title or description which Jesus was accustomed to use of Himself. Manson says (*Teaching of Jesus*, p. 214) that in this particular passage "Son of Man" means man in general. If so, the truth which Jesus here affirms is that to be rightly related to God is to know how to use God's gift without abusing it. Jesus Himself observed the Sabbath day (Luke iv. 16: "as his custom was"), but refused to be bound by purely conventional rules, and especially by the "traditions" worked out by the Scribes and Pharisees in their anxiety to avoid the least risk of breaking the Law.

It is by action springing from the love, power and purpose of God that Jesus so effectively answers the charge of those who attacked Him in the name of religious orthodoxy (iii. 22-30). The context shows what He meant by His saying (which often worries children) that BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT "hath no forgiveness." Those who persist in attributing undeniably good deeds to evil motives and diabolical powers cannot at the same time think of God in such a way that mutual trust and fellowship, the vital elements in forgiveness, are possible. A change of

attitude in the man who sins is the necessary counterpart of the forgiveness which God bestows. Though God may forgive an offence against His dignity and righteousness, men shut themselves off from Him by crass refusal to recognise Him in His works and gifts.

From this we are led by a natural sequence to a fuller understanding of the KINGDOM OF GOD (cf. p. 164). Men sought to enter it by the meticulous keeping of rules, many of which, like those about fasting, were largely negative. Jesus taught that the Kingdom must enter men's hearts by spontaneous and glad recognition of God's presence and power in their world. The Kingdom of God is essentially a matter of personal relationships: self-discipline is positive because the aim is not self-perfection, but service of God and one's fellows. The life of God within men *must* find expression in ways that make havoc of mere conventional orthodoxy. Christianity cannot be a "thing of shreds and patches," bits of good conduct and right feeling added to old habits and motives. Saul of Tarsus was an example of a Pharisee who desperately wanted to remedy defects in his character, but only made matters worse till the love of God was shed abroad in his heart (cf. John Wesley before his conversion, and the reference to Rom. xiv. 17 in *Syllabus*, p. 47).

Among the PHARISEES (see p. 168) were some of the finest and best representatives of the noblest religion the world had yet seen. Why did men so eager about the service of God cavil at Jesus' pronouncement of forgiveness (ii. 1-12), at His permitting His followers to rub and eat a few ears of corn on the Sabbath (ii. 23-8), at His healing a man on the day set apart for rest and worship (iii. 1-6), at His healing diseases of the mind (iii. 23-30)? It is easy to make the Pharisees the villains of the piece. A little effort to grasp the Pharisees' ideals will show why Jesus so soon

encountered opposition, and what is the bearing of these stories upon religion and life to-day. See pp. 62, 168, and note John x. 31-3. It is worth asking also why Jesus' family should be so slow to understand (iii. 20-1, 31-5).

Meantime, it is far more important for pupils to notice and dwell upon the great phrase in which Mark so simply describes DISCIPLESHIP AND APOSTLESHIP than that they should be able to repeat the list of names by heart: "That they might *be with* him, and that he might send them forth" (iii. 14). The restraint of Mark's reference to Judas is notable also (cf. Matt. x. 4; Luke vi. 16; John vi. 70, 71).

2. *The Messianic Secret: iv. 1-vi. 56.*

In the early part of His ministry, Jesus speaks constantly about the Kingdom which He knows that He is to establish. Most of His parables are meant to enable people to gain an insight into what the Kingdom is and involves. THE PARABLES are not just a series of happy illustrations of points in His teaching. Many spring out of particular situations in which Jesus and His disciples found themselves. Some are evidently devised to make the disciples think, so that they may see in a new light what they thought they already knew all about: the hearers are left with a question to answer for themselves. It is a mistake, therefore, to approach all the parables in the same way, as it is also to elaborate the interpretation and application of them in detail. Each parable has its main point. Details are as a rule simply an artistic means of arresting and holding attention, though once or twice, as in Jesus' own interpretation of the Sower, there are subordinate points which support the main truth. Many scholars regard the "interpretations" attached to the parables as probably given later by Christian teachers who

expounded them: this might be the case here, but if any is to be attributed to Jesus Himself this one may. Parables may well be discussed in class to elicit the central meaning of each. Incidentally it should be remembered that Eastern teachers often use hyperbole (i.e. deliberately extravagant statement, as in the Parable of the Mote and the Beam, Luke vi. 41) and also that Jesus not seldom appealed to the humour of His listeners, while again He frequently argues from the best in human experience to the character of God—"If any man . . . *how much more* your Father in heaven." Teachers will find *Parables of the Gospels*, by Hugh Martin (S.C.M. Press, 6s.), valuable. See also Dodd, *Parables of the Kingdom*.

This group of parables (iv. 1-30) combines Jesus' comment on the nature and progress of His own mission with enlightenment of the people and the Twelve concerning WAYS IN WHICH GOD'S KINGDOM COMES. Seed, soil and circumstance must work together if a harvest is to result. Men may be careless, indifferent, pre-occupied, hard-hearted, and these conditions may hinder or even frustrate the appeal of the Word of God to them and the working of His life in them. Patience and persistence were needed even in preaching the Gospel, and in the end the hearers have their own responsibility. But, as every farmer knows, and as certain plants show, it is a mistake to estimate success by what can be seen, or too soon. More was going on in the depths of men's hearts, and more men were really responding, than might appear. God works secretly, surely, without haste and without rest.

Observe that iv. 12 is not a statement of purpose, but of process and result (cf. Peake on Isa. vi. 9-10, p. 107). God does not wish to keep the knowledge of Himself and of His kingdom from anybody, but people who are not in earnest pass hastily over what they see

and hear, *so that* they never perceive what these things mean: or they do not want to be disturbed, *and consequently* they miss the challenge to think (cf. p. 28 on the purpose of parables). *Because* they do not repent, change their minds, alter their attitude, they cannot even desire forgiveness, and God Himself cannot make it effective in their lives: for people who ignore or deny their need of it render harmony between themselves and God impossible. So, again (iv. 23-5), a faculty unused tends to deteriorate and even atrophy. The law of life is: develop or degenerate.

The truth about the Messiah, the Kingdom and Jesus as Lord is A "MYSTERY"—not something unintelligible, but something to be understood in due course (iv. 11). The "mystery religions" of the East contained rites and teachings open only to those who had passed through prescribed ceremonies and paid for the privilege. The point here is that the Kingdom is God's gift, and those, like the Twelve, to whom it is being made so manifest should be able to understand and appreciate it for what it is, though for the mass of the people thought-provoking parable must be used to convey a secret meant for all men (iv. 21).

The MIRACLE STORIES in this section are obviously difficult (cf. pp. 21-6). They raise the whole question of how far Jesus was Lord of Nature and of death, as well as of the minds and bodies of men. Mark's answer is that the only limit is the degree of true and rightly-directed faith exercised. For us in the modern world of science there are intellectual difficulties where Mark and his contemporaries found none. The science and philosophy of the Jews were expressions of their religious faith, not the outcome of intellectual enquiry. The Christian of to-day thinks in terms of our increasing knowledge of Nature (e.g. evolution, the action of bacteria, the proximate causes of storms). But he is not

a materialist. He does not believe that even the physical universe is fixed and closed (the discoveries and theories of scientists concerning the nature of matter and energy are exploding that dogma), and he sees the wisdom and will of God in the consistency of "natural law."

But "natural law" is not a fixed ordinance: it is simply the scientist's summary of what thus far has been observed: it must be modified when any new and tested fact appears. Knowledge of these "laws" makes it possible for us to live a secure and orderly life: when we "discover" and utilise some hitherto unrecognised but always existent form of energy like electricity, both life and law are enriched, even though there is yet much that we do not understand about this new resource.

We scrutinise the historical evidence for Nature miracles more closely than that for miracles of healing, because psychotherapy has made us more familiar with the fact of bodily healing through mental process—though still, be it remarked, we cannot explain adequately how body and mind interact. So far as the Gospels are concerned the evidence for both types is much the same, and the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels is that of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, but we may reckon with a greater tendency even in Mark's time to "heighten" the facts when a Nature miracle is involved. We rightly discriminate, as far as careful study of the records enables us to do, between a simpler and a more elaborate account of a miracle, or between miracles which may really be cases of coincidence and those which obviously cannot be so explained. The actual text of the story must also be considered: thus *storms* on Galilee rise and subside with remarkable suddenness, and some scholars hold that, despite the definite statement in the narrative and the

conclusion drawn by the disciples (iv. 41), the words "Peace, be still" in iv. 39 were spoken to the terror-stricken men and not to the winds and waves. Even on a "reduced" interpretation of this story it can be said that Jesus was Lord of fear in Himself and bade His followers exercise equal faith in the care and purpose of God for them. The important thing is neither to assume that every miracle can be rationalised, i.e. explained away, nor to suppose that belief in God's power as beyond our comprehension necessitates the literal acceptance of every miracle in every detail. Theologians no longer maintain that the divinity of Jesus is proved by His working of miracles, but rather that a personality uniquely one, as His was, with God, man and Nature may well achieve what no other human being has wrought, as He in fact did.

In Mark the FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND is just one among other miracles. It is the only one recorded in all four Gospels, and in the Fourth we are told that the people took it as a sign that Jesus was "the prophet which was to come" and sought to take Him by force and make Him king. His refusal to be put at the head of a political revolution caused popular revulsion. At this point, then, He may have turned from the miracle-seeking multitude (see p. 23) to concentrate upon the preparation of the Twelve for their special task. John adds here the discourse on the Bread of Life, undoubtedly sacramental in significance and probably related to the Jewish idea of the Messianic banquet in the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is clear that special interest and meaning were attached in the early Church to this particular miracle and that, whatever did in fact happen, a deep and lasting impression was created upon the minds of the Twelve.

We therefore cannot ignore it. Some believe, that by

direct action of spirit upon matter Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes as the Marcan story plainly implies, others that Jesus shared with His own little group the provisions brought by the boy and His example was followed by each of the other groups with what anybody chanced to have, others, again, that the teaching of Jesus was a spiritual feast which so exalted the people that they forgot the need of physical refreshment. Boys and girls should understand that sincere Christians may reasonably differ thus, but that "explanations" are less important than the event, taken as a whole, in its setting, and with its consequences.

Whether it was "acted parable" or simple miracle, the people misinterpreted it as a mere exhibition of power, and though Jesus by no means ceased to heal and help people physically, as the remainder of the chapter abundantly proves, He became more and more concerned that His chosen followers should understand and respond without reserve to His Messiahship. The disappointment at Nazareth (vi. 1-6), where He might have expected the readiest sympathy and the most whole-hearted support, made it the more evident that, opposed by the Pharisees because of their tradition, misunderstood by the multitude because they expected and desired a revolutionary and nationalistic leader, and despised by His own people because they thought they knew all about Him, He must win the right kind of response from His little band of followers if His enterprise was to succeed. Yet even they had not yet sufficient faith and insight, as their selfish and timorous behaviour in the storm had shown (iv. 35-41). They were even a little afraid of His power (iv. 41). The story in vi. 45-52 is clearly not a duplicate of the Stilling of the Storm, but the essence of the two is the same—the almost superstitious fear on the part of the disciples contrasted with the quiet and effective

authority of their Master in the presence of danger or difficulty.

The story about JAIRUS' DAUGHTER naturally appeals to boys and girls, not only because the subject was a child, but also because of the father's devotion and desperate persistence, and above all because of the kindness of Jesus—Mark preserves the simple Aramaic words, "Get up, little girl" (perhaps, as has been suggested, those with which the child's mother usually called her in the morning; cf. *Abba*, Father). Those who find it hard to believe that Jesus raised anyone from the dead naturally emphasise His words, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." Possibly He meant, "Yes, but death is not the end, as you suppose: she will awaken unto life again." But "he took with him Peter, James and John," and on every other occasion when this is noted He was to pass through a very great experience.

THE TWELVE must have their own independent experience of preaching the good news of the Kingdom and discovering its power if they are truly to understand it. So they are SENT FORTH (vi. 7-13). It is another mark of the Evangelists' restraint that so little is said, at this point or subsequently, of the "wonderful works" which in the name and power of Jesus the disciples wrought. (But cf. ix. 28-9, 38-9; Luke x. 17-20; Acts ii. 43, iii. 12-13.)

The episode of JOHN THE BAPTIST'S DEATH (vi. 14-29) is introduced less, apparently, for its own sake than to explain another source of opposition and danger to Jesus and His mission. Herod Antipas ruled Galilee and Peræa—only part of the former dominion of Herod the Great—and was responsible to Rome for keeping order in a district notoriously restless. On the other hand, he affected sympathy with the Jews, and possessed a real interest in all new cultural and religious

movements. He showed a mingling of curiosity and superstition in his attitude to John the Baptist and Jesus, but in practical politics he was influenced both by his domestic entanglements and by his intention to repress anything that might end in nationalist or fanatical outbreaks.

B. Withdrawal: vii. 1-ix. 50

1. The Wanderings of Jesus: vii. 1-viii. 26.

The Note on pp. 48-9 of the *Syllabus* indicates the significance of what might seem a group of miscellaneous stories. These bring out the growth of powerful OPPOSITION TO JESUS. He steadily maintained the refusal, determined upon during the forty days after His baptism, to play the part of a political revolutionary, a Messiah who would be no more than another Judas Maccabæus (cf. p. 19). Even the Twelve did not yet see what the true Messiahship meant, and what it would probably involve for Himself and for all who were loyal to Him and to the Kingdom. He must open their eyes to this or His mission would be frustrated. Meantime to die in a casual episode brought about by the emissaries of the ecclesiastics and traditionalists at Jerusalem, or to be imprisoned and perhaps killed by Herod, like John the Baptist (iii. 6), would rob Him of the chance of making an effective appeal to the whole people as well as to the religious leaders. To succeed, this must be made at the right place, Jerusalem, and at the right time, when thousands of Jews, not only from Galilee and Judæa but from "the Dispersion" all over the then known world, were gathered together for a great festival of worship.

Good maps should be used at this point to show (*a*) that Syro-Phœnicia was just over the border, beyond Herod's jurisdiction and outside the influence of the

emissaries from Jerusalem; and (b) how Greek life and thought had permeated Palestine since the days of Alexander the Great (see p. 132), and had become centred in such cities as the ten in the Decapolis and others built by the Herods near the lake of Galilee and on the seacoast (Bethsaida Julias, Cæsarea Philippi, Cæsarea). In these Greek was spoken, Greek dress worn, Greek religious ceremonies practised in typical Greek temples, Greek games played in great stadia. Jesus was in frequent contact with the great Gentile world, even though He went so little outside the actual limits of Palestine.

"MAKING ALL MEATS CLEAN" (vii. 19) is a comment upon the far-reaching effect of what Jesus taught. Food-restrictions and rules about ceremonial purification before eating sprang from the Jews' long struggle both for ceremonial righteousness before God and for maintenance of racial purity (see pp. 129-31, on Ezra's order, and Ruth). "Table-fellowship" between Jewish Christians and Gentile converts was a cause of controversy between Apostles (cf. Acts xi. 2 ff., xv. 1-20), and the principle here established by Jesus is reasserted by Paul (1 Cor. viii; Gal. ii. 11 ff., cf. p. 193). That controversy of course arose and was settled after the death and resurrection of Jesus, but not long before Mark wrote his Gospel, so that this passage may reflect the intensity of feeling which had developed within the Church, and the emancipation of Christians by Jesus from Jewish legalism and separatism.

2. *The Messianic Crisis: The Shadow of the Cross:*
viii. 27-ix. 50

In moving about the country on their own account (vi. 7-13), the Twelve were able to gather what general impression Jesus was creating. Popular opinion connected Jesus with Messianic expectations. Some

people shared the somewhat superstitious notion of Herod (vi. 14). Others thought that He was Elijah returned to herald the Messiah (Mal. iv. 5), or simply that He reminded them of the men who had sought to bring about a revival of religion four centuries earlier. He was certainly more prophet than rabbi. "Are they right? What do you yourselves believe?" The answer was critical for Jesus as well as for the Twelve. Had they penetrated no more deeply than other people, He must still have stayed His advance. Peter, impulsive and forthright, commits himself at once, and the others at any rate make no demur (viii. 27-33). "Thou art the Christ." Mark records no elaboration of the words, no commendation by Jesus, no reference to the founding of the Church, as in Matt. xvi. 17-18.

PETER'S DECLARATION was not a formal theological statement but simply a frank and unreserved admission that in Jesus the long-expected Messiah, sent by God to deliver His people and set up His Kingdom (cf. Acts i. 6), had come.

Jesus knew His man. Peter's conviction, though naïve, went deep enough to enable him to stand the stark truth, even if it came as a disillusionment. Jesus could now (*Syllabus*, p. 48) make clear the full meaning of Messiahship as He Himself had come to perceive it, though (Mark viii. 30) only to those who could receive it without fatal misunderstanding. His challenge to Jew and Gentile at Jerusalem would be the occasion for declaring it openly. "The Son of man must suffer" (viii. 31). This combines two great truths with which Jews were already familiar, but which they had hitherto kept apart. "SON OF MAN" might simply mean, in Aramaic, "man": in Daniel's vision "a son of man" (Dan. vii. 13) has an apocalyptic significance and is generally taken as symbolic of an empire "humane

rather than bestial." "The Son of Man," in the Gospels, is the Messiah, and popular expectation clothed him with glory and honour, as the mighty deliverer sent of God (cf. p. 234). Professor T. W. Manson maintains that "Son of Man in the Gospels is another embodiment of the Remnant idea . . . the Son of Man is, like the Servant of Jehovah, an ideal figure and stands for the manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth in a people wholly devoted to their heavenly King." The mission of Jesus is "to create the Son of Man, the Kingdom of the Saints of the Most High, to realise in Israel the ideal contained in the term" (*Teaching of Jesus*, p. 227). Who was meant by "the Servant" in the "Servant Songs" of second Isaiah (see p. 124) is not certain—the people of Israel as a whole, a "remnant," or an ideal figure patterned, perhaps, on such a historical character as Jeremiah: but the truth conveyed is that of VICARIOUS SUFFERING—"he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities and with his stripes we are healed." Now, as Dean Matthews says (*Christ*, p. 116), "what we have to contemplate is, not the interesting combination of two concepts never before brought together, but one who was in his own experience both Messiah and Servant and who faced all the consequences." The "must" implies neither precise foreknowledge of events nor any such legal necessity as some theories of the Atonement presuppose. Jesus perceived, from the growth in the intensity of opposition to Himself and His message, that only one of two things could happen at Jerusalem: either His appeal would prevail or His opponents would make an end of Him. By now it was clear to Him that in all probability there would not be the response for which He still dared to hope. But the Kingdom could not fail. The only way seemed to be to witness to its reality and bring home the power of it

to His persecutors by dying for it and for them. This was what He now called upon Peter and the others of the Twelve to face. They must recognise that if they were loyal to Him and to the Kingdom they too must suffer. But that would not be the end. The creative love and power of God would be manifest. "After three days" (viii. 31) may have been a more precise statement added by Mark or his informants after the event. What Jesus knew beyond all doubt was that men could not kill the love of God or defeat His purpose.

"Get thee behind me, Satan" (adversary). Peter (cf. Matt. xvi. 21, 22) could not yet think of the Messiah as anything but triumphant in the conventionally expected way. For Jesus Peter's expostulation was a reminder of the Temptation, when He had once and for all put behind Him the thought of such a Messiahship (Matt. iv. 10). God's ways are not as man's ways.

Though Jesus now introduced into His preaching the demand for self-surrender to the point of laying down one's life for the sake of the Kingdom, He did not say anything to the multitude about His Messiahship (viii. 34-8). "His cross"—a touch of grim realism. Crosses were familiar enough as the penalty of attempted insurrection. At Sepphoris, across the valley from Nazareth, 2,000 Jews are said to have been crucified as the outcome of an abortive rising against the Romans when Jesus was a boy of ten or thereabouts. To follow any prophet was dangerous in those days: Jesus repeatedly warned enthusiasts to count the cost of attaching themselves to His cause (cf. Luke xiv. 28; Mark x. 38). He certainly does not mean here the little self-denials and minor burdens which are part of daily life for a Christian or, so far as that goes, for every decent member of a community. To save one's life (R.V. marg., "soul") was not to escape destruction but to preserve all that was truly precious.

With viii. 38 goes ix. 1 (cf. R.V., paragraphed edition). Jesus uses the apocalyptic imagery of His time (see p. 143). Only figurative speech can convey what lies beyond all human experience. But He was concerned less with the way *in* which and the time *at* which the Kingdom would come fully than with the fact and the nature of the Kingdom. "With power"—already the Kingdom was dynamically present in Himself. By His accomplishment of His own work that power would be released in far greater measure, as some of those about Him would live to see (cf. John xiv. 12; Acts i. 5, ii. 1-21, 31-6, xvii. 6).

In reflecting upon the story of the TRANSFIGURATION, we must remember (*Syllabus*, Note on Miracles, pp. 125-8), that the disciples were there and we were not. The account is given us not, like those of the Baptism and the Temptation, from the standpoint of Jesus, but from that of Peter, James and John. They were overwhelmed by the experience, but they saw that Jesus stood in unique relationship to God and to the Law and the Prophets, the essence of Judaism. In Him God was manifesting Himself as never before, and all that the Jews had known and hoped for was being fulfilled. They saw Jesus radiant with a glory which confirmed their belief that He was the Messiah, though it was a glory different from that pictured in the apocalyptic writings: it was the splendour of a man transformed by the indwelling presence of God. Their references to their own limitation of understanding are very realistic, so that on the face of it the story is not merely imaginative.

There is a vividly dramatic contrast between the scene on the Mount and the scene at its foot. The significance of the story is that there is real connection between the two. Often only the contrast is pointed out. But the power of which the disciples had just witnessed a wonderful manifestation was the same

power that Jesus exercised in His ministry among men (cf. Peter's sermon, Acts x. 38: "who went about doing good . . . and healing . . . for God was with him"). It is available for men, but only as, through prayer and self-discipline, they maintain communion with God. The Transfiguration was not an other-worldly incident, but a manifestation of the power with which the Kingdom of God breaks into men's lives.

In ix. 30-2, Mark is terse—almost tense. Details of the journey would be irrelevant. No chance must be given casual crowds, enthusiastic after a miracle, to indulge in dangerous demonstrations based upon a misunderstanding of Jesus' mission and claims. Even the Twelve were mystified. Jesus was the Messiah, but why did He insist so much that He might meet His death at Jerusalem instead of being confident that by challenge and appeal He would at last win the whole nation? And if He were killed? The Pharisees taught the resurrection of the righteous. Moses and Elijah had but now appeared in the vision which some of them had seen. Herod had supposed that Jesus was John the Baptist, risen again. What could the resurrection of Jesus mean but His return to heavenly glory rather than the inauguration of the Kingdom on earth? Note that the whole passage is a summary, written in retrospect, and after the actual event: for "three days," see p. 39, and cf. Note on the Passion, p. 66.

The argument ("reasoning") in ix. 33-50 may have been friendly enough and was not unnatural so long as they still thought of the Kingdom on the analogy of an earthly realm. But as soon as Jesus drew their talk into the light of His own character, they began to feel how unworthy it was. His acted parable drove the point home. To "receive" is to welcome and accept, in mutual love and trust. RECEIVING A CHILD is the very opposite of ambitious approach to a prince who has

place and power in his gift. Moreover, the "power" of the Kingdom of God is power to help and to serve. The presence and quality of it are manifest in what it does. The true children of the Kingdom look for and discover kinship with any in and through whom the power of God is at work. They cannot be superior and exclusive. To give way to any inclination towards the misuse of ordinary capacities and powers is to run real risk of disaster. Compromise is fatal, not only to oneself, but to one's influence over those who look to one for help. Jesus is not here preaching asceticism, but discipline springing from love.

For "hell" (ix. 43-7) R.V. marg. has "Gehenna," the place where refuse was destroyed, and refers to Isa. lxvi. 24; Eccclus. vii. 17. In taking up the pictorial, not to say hyperbolical (see p. 29) language of His time and people, Jesus was not asserting the literal truth of it, but using it to reinforce, in terms whose strength His hearers would understand, the gravity of the loss and sorrow incurred by those who rejected the rule of God's spirit in their own lives, or hindered instead of helping the coming of it in the lives of others, especially of those who were weak or without knowledge. On the other hand, those who welcomed the Kingdom must be ready for cleansing and purification, which might sometimes be painful. Even this process must be watched. Religion that has gone wrong and enthusiasm that has become vehement mutual intolerance (ix. 50) are useless. Note R.V. marg. on ix. 49, 50, especially: "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt."

C. The Journey to Jerusalem: x. 1-52

"The borders of Judæa and beyond Jordan": *i.e.* an easterly circuit, avoiding the more usual road, which was likely, at this time, to be alive with people coming up to the Feast. But He was sought out by "the

multitudes," as also by some of those Pharisees bent upon bringing this heretical movement to an end.

The reply of Jesus to the question about divorce (x. 1-13) must be taken in its setting. Jewish rabbis differed in their INTERPRETATION OF THE LAW. Jesus did not take sides in their dispute, but asked what is the Law, as stated in the Pentateuch, and compelled His adversaries to admit that it was not characterised by mere literalism and legalism. Jesus Himself said that true marriage is a living personal relationship in which God has a part and a purpose, and that adultery is the breaking of a spiritual bond. The Law allowed a man to divorce his wife in certain circumstances; tradition had extended the original recognition of the fact that human failings and limitations ("for the hardness of your hearts") might make a legal marriage no true marriage, until divorce was possible on almost frivolous grounds—though, if a man put away his wife "because she burnt his dinner," obviously there was no longer any real personal inter-relationship which could be called marriage. On the other hand, the Law made no provision for a woman to divorce her husband at all: since the withdrawal or cessation of the genuine love and loyalty expressed as "leaving parents and cleaving to each other" might arise on either side, Jesus put the woman on exactly the same basis as the man: the rights, privileges and responsibilities of man and wife are in this respect equal. This illustrates the attitude to women in which Jesus completely transcended the old Law, and also His principle that love is the fulfilment of the Law, i.e. that love accomplishes what law can only seek to safeguard. For the Jew, of course, there was no duality between "civil" and "religious" marriage: the two aspects were united in the one act and ceremony.

As a little child would—or as he would receive a

little child? (x. 13-16). The key to the teaching of Jesus is His own FILIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. We can neither perceive and welcome the Kingdom nor enter into it unless we possess the spirit of mutual love and trust which is vital to a true parent-child relationship. But childlikeness is not childishness. Pride, self-satisfaction and sophistication are fatal: faith and a sense of reverent dependence, as well as simplicity and spontaneity, are essential. This theme runs through the rest of the chapter.

PART II. THE PASSION

A. Jesus' Challenge to Jerusalem: xi. 1-xii. 2

In Mark this appears to be the only visit which Jesus paid to Jerusalem after the beginning of His ministry. John, probably with greater accuracy, refers to three. In any case, Jesus went up on this occasion with a specific and deliberate purpose, and not simply to attend the Passover. The opposition of Scribes and Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians to His mission had become more persistent and threatening. The common people had become disillusioned and unsympathetic. This might well end in His death (Mark viii. 31-8). Indeed, such an issue seemed inevitable, not only in the light of events, but because of the truth, declared by the Prophets and manifest in the history of Israel, that redemption could come only through vicarious suffering. He had known with increasing certainty that the Son of Man, who should bring in the Kingdom of God, must also be the Suffering Servant (cf. p. 125), bearing the sin of many, making intercession for the transgressors—and yet destined to see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied (cf. Isa. liii. with Mark viii. 31-8, ix. 9-13).

But if He must face death, this must not be merely as a passive victim of human blindness, selfishness and hate. That would be defeat. He must die, as it were, in battle for the Kingdom, appealing to men's better selves against their worse, relying wholly upon the infinite wisdom and unchangeable love of God. So He went forward with resolution and awe-inspiring courage (Mark x. 32-4), hoping that His appeal might still avail (cf. Mark xiv. 35).

It is of great importance that boys and girls should grasp this point if they are to understand the SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DEATH OF JESUS. Otherwise it will be difficult for them to see in it anything more than the most sublime of martyrdoms: or they may even be led to suppose that Jesus went to Jerusalem *in order that* He might be killed, because (so ran the old theological argument) thus only could prophecy be fulfilled, and unless Jesus was punished by death for the sins of men, God would not be free to forgive sinners. The truth is rather that Jesus went to Jerusalem to challenge the sin of God's people at its very focus, even if the challenge cost Him His life; but He went also to proclaim the love and forgiveness of God, although it might be possible to do so only by letting the result of men's resistance fall upon Himself. Thus, by laying down His life, He would witness to the invincibility of God's love and power, which, He believed, would be manifested in raising Him from the dead and bringing conviction and change of heart at last to those whom He had come to save, not merely from the consequence of sinning, but from their sins (cf. Matt. i. 21; Mark x. 45).

The doctrine of the ATONEMENT is not something superimposed by St. Paul or the later Church upon the story recounted in the Gospels, though the theories advanced to explain *how* Jesus "suffered for sins once,

the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18) have been worked out in terms of the Hebrew sacrificial system, Roman law, mediæval chivalry and so forth, according to the range of ideas characteristic of the time when they were evolved. What the early Church insisted upon was the fact, of which the first Christians had experience. The Gospels devote so large a part of their space to the Passion and the Resurrection because this is what the Apostolic preaching proclaimed first and foremost. But these supreme events were significant because of what, in the personality and ministry of Jesus, led up to them (as well as what, in the creation of the Church by the coming of His Spirit, followed). It is therefore vital that boys and girls should see clearly "how it all came about" before any theoretical interpretation is presented to them.

The "TRIUMPHAL ENTRY" (xi. 1-11) was a symbolic act, an "acted parable," such as Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel used (see p. 107). It was the beginning of Jesus' final challenge and appeal to His people and to their leaders. No doubt He had Zech. ix. 9 in mind. Comparison of the accounts (Matt. xxi; Luke xix; John xii) will bring out more clearly the part played by "the disciples" and the crowd of pilgrims already thronging the road to Jerusalem. The cries of the people were in the words of Ps. cxviii. 26, originally a greeting to any pilgrim, but now connected with the hope of national restoration and used liturgically at the Feast of Tabernacles. Whatever it all may have meant to the multitudes, the authorities would see in it a disappointing revival of Jesus' popularity ("the world is gone after Him," John xii. 19) and a dangerous possibility of another Messianic rising (cf. "Judas and Theudas," Acts v. 36). But apparently they all missed the point of Jesus' riding upon an animal which, in contrast with

a war-horse, a king might use for peaceful approach (John xviii. 36).

Mark xi. 11 is surely the direct link between xi. 9-10 and xi. 15. The new order must begin, as all the Prophets had realised, from vision and worship of God (cf. especially Isa. vi). Jesus went straight to the Temple, not only in acknowledgment of this, but because it was the appropriate place for Him to utter His call to both priests and people. But the din of traffic in "sacred" things (creatures for sacrifice and money for offerings, out of which the Sadducaic priesthood made shameless and immense gain by exploiting the monopoly) made both worship and preaching impossible. Jesus therefore simply "looked round upon all things" and retired to meditate upon His next step. Another "symbolic action" followed next day in the CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE. The force used was of the slightest. Mark does not even mention the "scourge of cords," which John (ii. 15), who alone does, may well mean that Jesus used to drive out "both the sheep and oxen" at the same time as He symbolically "overthrew" the misused tables and seats (Mark xi. 15). The vehemence of His righteous wrath would be enough to scatter "them that sold and them that bought" before Him. xi. 16 probably means that Jesus stopped people who were using the Temple as a short cut from one part of the city to another (Montefiore, *Synoptic Gospels*, I, p. 269), thus protesting "against popular irreverence, as well as against priestly abuse," as Blunt says.

John, probably right in most points of chronological difference from the Synoptics, is as probably wrong in placing the cleansing of the Temple at the beginning of Jesus' ministry (John ii): for reasons, see commentaries. It is unlikely that Jesus cleansed the Temple twice, and it seems that the episode was one reason for His arrest

at the instance of the High Priest and the Sanhedrin—their response to His challenge and claim.

The story of the BARREN FIG-TREE (Mark xi. 12-14) is difficult, not so much because it is a Nature miracle, as because it seems to attribute to Jesus an action both irrational and inconsistent (cf. Luke iv. 3-4). Perhaps a parable (e.g. Luke xiii. 6-9) has been transformed by tradition into a miracle (cf. p. 22). Montefiore (*Synoptic Gospels*, I, p. 266) says that "at least the story must have been greatly perverted from what actually took place," and, writing as a liberal Jew, remarks: "The curses of Rabbis and their results are an unpleasing feature in Rabbinic literature. There is even a saying of a Rabbi to the effect that 'even the groundless curse of a wise man is fulfilled.' The Rabbis took themselves much too seriously." Gore called it "a miracle of judgment." But the question is *why* Jesus should do this. Matt. xxi. 19 says that the tree withered at once, but this may be a "heightening" of the Marcan story. It has been suggested that Jesus saw signs of disease in the tree, and that what Peter interpreted as a "curse" (Mark xi. 20) was a symbolic pronouncement, the tree being taken to represent "the rejection of unfruitful Israel." Mark says simply that "he hungered." Seeing the tree, He may well have wished that the time of figs *had* come, and then, when He perceived that the tree was not only fruitless as yet, but actually diseased, the parallel with Israel may have come into His mind: in her refusal to accept the light and life of the Kingdom, she judged herself and could no longer fulfil the purpose of her existence. Jesus says that the fig-tree shall be barren, not withered.

The connection of the barren fig-tree with FAITH in Mark xi. 20-4 complicates the difficulties still further, but Q (Matt. xvii. 20; Luke xvii. 6) places practically the same group of sayings in quite different, and much

more probable, circumstances. Jesus could not have meant that the exercise of faith in God could produce any desired result whatever, however irrational or even immoral. Mark represents Peter, not Jesus, as noticing that the tree had withered. This suggests that there was no actual connection between Peter's remark (whether it implied a request for an explanation, or merely expressed surprise) and Jesus' words about faith. Jesus' mind must have been absorbed by the question, "What if the last appeal fails?" The answer was that God cannot fail: faith is committal to God even when we cannot see how it is possible for what we know to be His unquestionable purpose to be fulfilled; and faith involves, not merely conviction, but action. The Jews had a proverb which described a great teacher as "a remover of mountains." xi. 24 presents no difficulty except to superficial literalists, who take no account of the Eastern modes of speech which Jesus necessarily used, or, worse still, fail to bring the whole teaching and example of Jesus to the interpretation of particular sayings: here, of course, the words must be read in the light of Mark xiv. 34-7. The supreme achievement of faith and prayer is the attainment of power to know and do the will of God.

Jesus' opponents met His challenge by counter-challenge (xi. 28) before suppressing Him by misinterpretation and violence. Jesus' reply faced them with their own lack of moral sincerity. If they had not sacrificed conviction to love of power, they would not only have recognised the nature and source of Jesus' AUTHORITY (p. 21), but would have submitted to it, and responded gladly to His challenge and appeal. Once more they condemned themselves—by silence. Fear lest they should lose prestige and power betrays them again in xii. 12.

In xii. 1-11 Jesus' retelling of Isa. v may have been

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specially meant to show that His mission was in line with all that the Prophets had taught, a point still further reinforced by the somewhat violent change of metaphor involved in rounding off the story with the citation of Ps. cxviii. 22-3, a psalm which may have been much in Jesus' mind, since the crowd had shouted phrases from it at the triumphal entry. In the parable the pit is a place for pressing grapes, and the tower for watching for thieves or wild animals, and for storage.

B. Sundry Questions and Pronouncements: xii. 13-xiii. 2

These are illustrative of Jesus' attitude towards DEBATABLE QUESTIONS, because they were practical, everyday issues, involving politics and religion (for the Jew everything political involved a religious principle). His answers show, not only that He refused to be "ensnared in His talk" (Matt. xxii. 15), and caused His opponents to fall into their own traps, but also that He refused to lay down rules for conduct. His teaching is adequate for all times and all occasions because He made great truths plain and left men to exercise judgment and common sense in applying them. Always He set men searching, not for solutions of conundrums, but for the essential moral or spiritual principle involved in any particular situation. The Pharisees set the Law above everything and were nationalists, antagonistic to the Roman dominance which conflicted with the Jewish ideal of theocracy. The Scribes were the guardians and interpreters of the Law, professional copyists and expositors, mostly Pharisees and nationalists. The Herodians were friendly to Rome, political adherents of Herod, whose policy was to keep on good terms with Roman and Jew. The Sadducees, unlike the other groups, who were all laymen, were priests, controlling the Temple and its revenues, seeking to

preserve the power and dignity which had come to the High Priestly house after the Maccabean revolt (cf. p. 145); they were conservative in religion, accepting the Law, but not the "traditions" cherished by the Pharisees, and they were both worldly and cynical in outlook. It is worth while to get a clear picture of these sects in mind: see Raven's *Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ* (pp. 16-22).

As to TRIBUTE MONEY (xii. 13-17), Jesus did not divide life into sacred and secular, State and Church, as though these had nothing to do with each other. Without condoning oppression or evil government (that which is Cæsar's is only that which is due to a civil power when it performs its function properly), Jesus at once recognised the facts (Roman government exists and is in some respects beneficial; cf. Rom. xiii. 1-7) and taught that duty to God comes first, but requires that a man be a good citizen. He gave no ground for the subsequent charge (Luke xxiii. 2; John xix. 12) that He was an encourager of sedition against Rome: His death was not a political martyrdom. This saying of Jesus is often treated as though it were very simple. The principle is clear, but the application has caused searching of conscience in many epochs of Christian history: Why should not Christians offer a pinch of incense before the Emperor's statue when Rome ruled the world (p. 261), or join in the nationalist ceremonies enjoined upon schools in modern Japan and Korea? What was at stake in the struggle between Roundhead and Royalist? Why should the Institute of International Relations regard the issue between religious bodies and secular governments in Europe to-day as among the most important of our time? (Lord Astor in N. Micklem's *National Socialism and the Roman Catholic Church*, p. xv.) Boys and girls of 11+ cannot yet appreciate or discuss all that is involved here, but

they should be kept from merely memorising the phrase as a pat answer to some of the most difficult and far-reaching questions in modern and contemporary history. This is a point at which correlation with such history can be made.

DO THE DEAD RISE? (xii. 18-27). The problem is put in a typically rabbinical way. Jesus cuts through it to the core of the matter, which is that true life here and hereafter consists in our relationship with God, the Father Everlasting. We know nothing about conditions in the life beyond save that in it our relationships with God, and therefore our relationships with each other, are perfected, transcending the limitations of even so intimate a relationship as marriage. Experience shows that unless this passage is carefully taught pupils will confuse it with the teaching of Jesus on marriage and divorce.

The relation of Jesus' TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS to what the Law said will be discussed later (pp. 166-70, 217). Love is not mere affection, but activity of the whole person with another as central object. Here, again, the greater includes the less. To love God involves loving our neighbours (cf. 1 John iii. 13-iv. 21). The Kingdom, or rule, of God is precisely the dominance in men's lives of this love. Jesus commended good men when He found them, whether they were Scribes, Pharisees, Roman centurions or any other. Verse 33 is the full truth of which the great sayings in Hos. vi. 6 and Mic. vi. 6-8 are foreshadowings. Love is in this sense the fulfilment of the Law (Rom. xiii. 8).

Evidently (Mark xii. 35) the Scribes in their attacks had appealed to the general belief that THE MESSIAH would be a descendant of David (cf. Isa. xi. 1). The quotation is from Ps. cx, which was almost certainly addressed to some priest-king (perhaps Simon) in the Maccabean period (cf. p. 145): but in the time of Jesus

the Psalms were ascribed as a whole to David, and Jesus assumed that David wrote it. Limitation of knowledge to what was knowable in His day was obviously part of the Incarnation, as were the reality of His physical body and the normal limitations of a healthy flesh-and-blood existence. No rejection of modern Biblical learning can legitimately be based on these references by Jesus to beliefs then prevalent about the authorship of Old Testament books. But the great difficulty about this passage is the apparent contradiction in the argument. Jesus seems to deny the connection between the Messiahship and Davidic descent, which was not only strongly held by many Jews, but was advanced by Christians later as a proof that Jesus was indeed Messiah (e.g. the genealogies in Matt. i and Luke iii, and passages such as Rom. i. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 8). For a full discussion, see commentaries such as Montefiore, *Synoptic Gospels*, I, p. 288; Blunt, *Mark*, p. 233; Gore's *Commentary*, p. 100. The Messiah might in fact be descended from David, as the prophecies said he would be, but this physical connection was not the basis of his claim. It was His relationship to God, not to David, that mattered; though the Kingdom of God was indeed the spiritual fulfilment of all that the Jews had hoped for and had idealised under the form of a restored Kingdom of David (cf. Mark xi. 10 and pp. 98, 149), it sprang from the eternal power and purpose of God Himself (cf. Mark xii. 27 for the similar argument about the real ground for believing in resurrection). This passage might well be left till the Third or Fourth Senior Year.

Concerning xii. 38-40, it should be remembered that Jesus did not condemn *all* Scribes or *all* Pharisees (cf. Mark xii. 34; John iii. 1; Luke xxiii. 50; Matt. xxvii. 57). C. H. Turner sums the passage up well: "They liked attention and deference; at their worst

they made material profit out of spiritual influence" (Gore's *Commentary*, p. 101). Josephus (*Antiquities*, xvii. 2) refers disparagingly to the influence which Pharisees exercised upon women, and only widows would be likely to possess property in their own right.

The "treasury" in the Temple (Mark xii. 41) consisted of thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles which would resound as money was cast into them. A mite was about one-third of a farthing. Like all Jesus' parabolic references to money (talents, pence, etc.), the amounts are symbolic of largeness and smallness.

xiii. 1-2 refers to the magnificent TEMPLE which it took Herod and his successors more than forty years (A.D. 20-64) to build, and which was destroyed at the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. We need not suppose that Jesus foresaw and prophesied the actual destruction of the Holy City in A.D. 70. His point is that even so strong and splendid a structure could not endure for ever and that its existence was no guarantee that, as Isaiah believed (cf. p. 107) and as many Jews seem still to have held (despite Jeremiah; cf. p. 114, and the destruction of the first Temple by Nebuchadrezzar in 586 B.C.), Jerusalem and the Temple were inviolable because the Temple was the place where the *Shekinah*, the very "glory," or localised presence, of God dwelt. Jews would be scandalised by what Jesus said, and His words were subsequently twisted into a ground of accusation (Mark xiv. 58; cf. John ii. 18-21; Acts vi. 13-14).

C. A Prophecy of Coming Tribulation and Glory: xiii. 3-37

Extended comment on this chapter would be superfluous since few teachers are likely to take it with their classes. A well-balanced discussion will be found in Blunt's *St. Mark*, "Clarendon Bible," pp. 235-46. In

addition to the *Syllabus* note it may be said that some scholars regard the whole chapter as added after the Gospel was written but before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Others consider that Mark may have incorporated it from the first, or even himself compiled it, as part of his Gospel. Few think that the whole of it could, in any case, be ascribed to Jesus. Those who find some parts to be in keeping with what we know of His spirit and teaching would hesitate to dogmatise, but would single out such passages as Blunt suggests—verses 2, 11, 26, 28-32, 33-7, as also 9, 12, 13, and possibly 15, 16 and 10. The rest they would regard as warnings, predictions and words of comfort which circulated in the early Church, perhaps at the time of the persecution by Nero; these were naturally cast in the phraseology and thought-forms of the Jewish apocalyptic literature which resulted from the pressure of earlier persecutions—e.g. Daniel (pp. 143 f.).

D. The Story of the Cross: xiv. 1-xv. 47

Of all the stories, parables and sayings which took independent oral or written form in the early Church and were gathered together in the Gospels for the use of preachers and teachers, the STORY OF THE CROSS and of the RESURRECTION was the chief. It was the first to be told when Christ was proclaimed to Jewish or Gentile groups. It occupies about a fourth of Mark and seems to have been a complete narrative in itself, moving continuously to its climax. Constant telling had, so to speak, crystallised it so that there are no superfluities and no obscurities. The language is of the simplest. It ought, therefore, to be presented to pupils as a whole, and even if the parts of it are taught in separate lessons, as the *Syllabus* suggests, the teacher or prepared pupils should read it through aloud, quietly

and simply, at the outset, and once or twice subsequently during the set of lessons.

THE WOMAN HAVING THE ALABASTER CRUSE (box or bottle) of perfume (xiv. 3, R.V. marg.) may have been Mary, the sister of Martha (cf. John xii. 3): there is no evidence that she was Mary Magdalene and that Simon the Leper (not mentioned in any other connection) was Lazarus. John xii. 4 says that Judas was the objector. But attempts to identify either host, woman or objectors, only lead to confusion with other stories. Blunt suggests (*Mark*, p. 247) that the tribute to Jesus was not only an expression of personal love and devotion, but was intended to recognise his Messiahship, that His words meant "not a throne, but a sepulchre is my lot," and that thus His utterance "may have provided the last impulse to Judas' disloyalty." Possibly the actual course of events coloured the telling of the story in the early Church and caused the putting into Jesus' mouth of the reference (xiv. 9) to preaching the Gospel throughout the world (cf. Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts i. 8). But there is no reason for supposing that Jesus Himself did not anticipate that the Kingdom of God should be proclaimed to all men, even though His own primary mission was to Israel (Matt. xv. 24). After the Exile, it was understood that the mission of the redeemed people was to all nations (cf. Isa. lii. 15-lv. 5; Ps. lxxvii. 2, lxxii. 11, 17). "Gospel," on the lips of Jesus, would most probably mean "good tidings of the Kingdom" (cf. Luke viii. 1).

It is now almost universally held that John (xiii. 1, 29, xviii. 28, xix. 31, 42) is right regarding the *day* on which the LAST SUPPER took place, i.e. that it was on the evening before the Passover lamb was slain, and not, as all three Synoptists seem to say, the evening When the Passover meal was eaten (see p. 179). It is probable that the Last Supper was the *Kiddush*.

Groups of friends (*chabûroth*, fraternities) were accustomed to meet on Friday afternoons for a social meal, with conversation of a religious character, as a prelude to the Sabbath or to a festival. As the hour for the beginning of the Sabbath (6 p.m.) drew on, the chief member of the group would take a cup of wine and pass it round after pronouncing a blessing upon it, thus "sanctifying" the approaching Sabbath or Sabbath and festival. It may well be that Jesus and the Twelve were accustomed to do this. When the Passover fell on a Sabbath day, as John xix. 31 indicates that it did on this occasion, the *Kiddûsh* would take place on the Thursday, the "day of Preparation." The "Last Supper" would thus be, not merely the last time when Jesus and the Twelve ate together, but the last of these particularly intimate and sacred meals which they had made a regular occasion of religious fellowship (cf. Mark iv. 34). The *Kiddûsh* could be eaten wherever the group lived, or happened to be: the Passover must be eaten at Jerusalem. Mark xiv. 13, 14 points to some previous understanding, or to the known habit of the friend at whose house Jesus wished the meal to be eaten (women carried the water: it was not usual for a man), as xi. 1-3 may do. The Greek word translated "evening" (xiv. 17) covered the late afternoon also, and suggests (John xiii. 30) that Jesus sat with the Twelve till it had become dark.

We may suppose that Jesus knew by intuition of the approaching BETRAYAL BY JUDAS (xiv. 17-21), rather than that He was fully aware of Judas' bargain with the Chief Priests, and verse 21*a* suggests that Isa. liii was in Jesus' mind. There have been many speculations about Judas' motive. The most likely interpretation of his action, especially in view of his subsequent suicide because he had "betrayed innocent blood" (Matt. xxvii. 4), is that he had a wrong conception of

Jesus' Messiahship and, in his enthusiastic belief that Jesus could and would bring in a temporal Kingdom of God by the exercise of supernatural power, had impatiently tried to force Jesus' hand, assuming that if matters were brought to an issue by an attempted arrest Jesus would be compelled to act in the way that Judas desired and expected. It is incredible that Jesus was under the necessity of including among the Twelve one who was a traitor from the start, and who was called simply in order to bring about Jesus' death so that prophecy might be fulfilled and the forgiveness of men's sins be made possible (cf. p. 45).

By the time when Mark was written, Christians were already celebrating the Lord's Supper regularly as a rite of remembrance and fellowship (cf. 1 Cor. xi. 23-5, written a few years before Mark: Luke xxii. 19 was written several years later). This would be the more natural if the meal was originally the *Kiddûsh*, if Jesus had been accustomed to eat it with the Twelve (cf. the recognition of Him in the breaking of bread at Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 30, 31), and if the celebration of it on the first day of week (cf. quotations, *Syllabus*, pp. 81-2) was a witness to the continued unity of Christians with their risen Lord. Mark says nothing about the institution, at this meal on the night before Jesus was crucified, of the Lord's Supper, or Eucharist: neither does Matthew or John. All that was necessary, since (as it would seem) the Supper was already an institution when the earliest Gospel was written, was to give a simple, faithful account of the meal as it took place, and of the profoundly significant words spoken by Jesus when He made the meal the crowning "symbolic act" (cf. p. 46) of His ministry. Judas' departure to betray Him immediately after the most intimate pledge of mutual good faith possible in the East ("he that dippeth with me in the dish"—host and guest were sworn to mutual

loyalty by eating bread and salt together) summed up in itself, whatever Judas' motive and intention, the blind folly and self-will that constitute the essence of the sin of the world. Jesus, nevertheless, not simply as the prophet of Nazareth, but as the Son of Man, gives Himself to the creation of a new covenant between God and God's people which will replace the old (xiv. 24: cf. Hos. xi. 7-9; Jer. xxxiii. 8; Ezek. xxxiii. 8, etc.; xxxvi. 25-7; Isa. liii). Resisting sin to the death, He at the same time imparts the "power of the endless life." He sets the seal upon His enduring spiritual unity with these men who have "been with Him" (cf. p. 28). This unity means that they have absorbed the energies of His life while He has lived among them as a man of flesh and blood (cf. John vi. 63). They are the nucleus of the new community, the true "people of God." The continued celebration of the Lord's Supper in the Church therefore becomes more than a simple memorial of His death "for many" (xiv. 24): it becomes a sacrament of His living presence, by His Spirit (cf. Matt. xviii. 20). The Twelve did not fully understand at the time—they could not, for Cross, Resurrection and Pentecost were still to come—but the symbolic act and the words of self-giving were sufficient to convey all that afterwards became clear about the connection between the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, the forgiveness of sin and the gift of newness of life to those who repent and put their trust in God through Jesus Christ, and the nature and function of the Christian Church as the body of Christ—His means of expressing Himself to the world in every age.

Interpretations of the Communion of the Lord's Supper (or the Eucharist—"service of thanksgiving and worship") differ, and keep branches of the one Church superficially apart. But in Mark's account of the Last Supper we have the facts on which all are based and in

which all are fundamentally one. What the Last Supper must have meant to the Twelve is well pictured by Bishop Blunt (*Mark*, pp. 249-52); we must agree that "with the idea of communion the idea of sacrifice must also have been throbbing in their minds during this solemn scene," and again that "Christian sacramental belief is the interpretation of an experience, and not the outcome of a theoretic speculation, whether of Paul or of anyone else."

The word for "new" in verse 25 means a new kind, not new-made: Jesus uses "Kingdom" here with reference to the eternal Kingdom beyond the gates of death, though it is by the power of this Kingdom that He has lived and wrought ("among you," Luke xvii. 20 R.V.; cf. xi. 20): here no doubt the familiar Jewish idea of the Messianic banquet is traceable (as in John vi; cf. p. 150; see Luke xiv. 15). "The gist of the verse is that if death is certain, so is reunion" (Blunt, *St. Mark*, p. 252).

The Eleven had evidently not grasped the imminence of the betrayal, or connected it with Judas and his departure, but they protested against any suggestion of weakness or disloyalty on their own part, and Peter, as always, was their most vehement representative (cf. viii. 29).

In GETHSEMANE (xiv. 32-41), as at the Transfiguration, Jesus would have made the inner group of the Twelve partners with Him in His deepest experiences, had they been sensitive enough. "If it be possible" seems to suggest, not that Jesus was overwhelmed by the prospect of physical suffering and death, but that He was enduring the agony of final rejection by His own people, whom He had come to save but who thus were bringing still further condemnation upon themselves, and furthermore that He was facing death with no absolute certainty that His own

disciples would maintain the cause of the Kingdom. He had *faith* that though they might now forsake Him, they would in the end stand fast (cf. Matt. xvi. 18, and His prayer for Peter, Luke xxii. 32). Was there still hope that at the critical moment His appeal to priests and people might succeed, or that before His death the Twelve, on whom so much would then depend, would prove their trustworthiness?

Mark records the ASSAULT ON THE HIGH PRIEST'S SERVANT, but not Jesus' healing intervention (Luke xxii. 51), and his Gospel, reflecting Peter's preaching, says most about Peter's misunderstandings and failures. Probably if Jesus had repaired the mistaken aggressiveness by a miracle Peter would have said so. The real point of the story may be that given it in Matt. xxvi. 51, 52, where the incident is used to introduce the saying, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," which affirms the futility of force and rejects the way of force.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN is a profound mystery to be contemplated only with deepest reverence. Boys and girls can scarcely be expected to enter very far into it. But both the agony and the story of the sword are bound up with the meaning of the Crucifixion, and a right presentation of them will help children to understand that Jesus on the Cross was not just a helpless victim of fanatical violence, or a mere example of passive "non-resistance."

"That the Scriptures might be fulfilled" (xiv. 49). Mark does not, like Matthew, seize every chance of connecting incidents in the life of Jesus with prophecy. On the lips of Jesus the phrase would mean less that a specific prophecy was thus fulfilled than that here was the climax of all that the insight of the prophets had perceived, especially as Jewish religion reached its highest point in the conception of the Suffering

Servant, whom Jesus identified (as the Jews did not) with the Messiah.

The "YOUNG MAN" of xiv. 51-2 is by many supposed to have been Mark himself, at whose mother's house, probably, the Last Supper was eaten, Jesus subsequently appeared to the Twelve and, perhaps, the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost occurred (Mark xvi. 14; John xx. 19; Acts i. 13; cf. Acts xii. 12).

Though Mark does not mention any preliminary examination before Annas (cf. John xviii. 13) he is probably right in representing this episode during the night as an informal EXAMINATION BY "THE HIGH PRIEST" (Caiaphas) with a view to working up a case upon which the condemnation of Jesus by the Roman governor could be secured, since the Sanhedrin could not order the death penalty (John xviii. 31) even for blasphemy, which under Jewish law was punishable by stoning (cf. John xix. 7). What was blasphemy to Jews, however, might be twisted into sedition in the eyes of a Roman official if Jesus could be made to appear leader of a Messianic movement likely to end in revolt against Roman domination. With the references to false witnesses in Mark, cf. the mendacity of the charges stated in Luke xxiii. 2.

Jews, in dread of using the name of God lightly, employed equivalents, such as "the Blessed" (xiv. 61) and "the Power" (xiv. 62): for this reason Matthew writes "Kingdom of Heaven" for "Kingdom of God." The reply of Jesus (like His replies in His temptations) is in words drawn from the Old Testament (Dan. vii. 13 and Ps. cx. 1). Mark makes this the first occasion on which JESUS EXPLICITLY CLAIMED MESSIAHSHIP and thereby disclosed the "Messianic secret" (cf. pp. 19).

The story of PETER'S DENIAL obviously must have been told by himself (cf. pp. 15, 61).

PILATE'S QUESTION (xv. 2) suggests that for their own purposes the Jewish accusers had given "Messiah" a political meaning, and Pilate's first duty was to ascertain whether the accused pleaded guilty. Jesus' answer, "You say so," was really a refusal to reply (cf. Gore's *Commentary*, p. 114). He neither denied His claim to be Messiah nor admitted that such a claim was political.

The demand of "the multitude" (xv. 8) seemed to Pilate to offer a chance of releasing Jesus and playing off the impulsive nationalistic crowd against the scheming of the priests, jealous of Jesus' influence, but the priests were too much for him and turned the clamour of the crowd to their own ends (xv. 11). Mark has not the same animus against "the Jews" as John, but leaves no doubt that the IMMEDIATE CAUSES OF JESUS' DEATH were treachery (Judas), religious and nationalistic fanaticism (priests, Pharisees and crowd), cynical defence of place and power (Sadducees), and lack of moral courage (Pilate). But all these were expressions of the sin of the world—an attitude of heart, mind and will which either resists what is known of God, or loves darkness rather than light (John iii. 19, ix. 41).

Simon of Cyrene (xv. 21) was either a North African or a Jew of the Dispersion, and Rufus may be the Rufus of Rom. xvi. 13.

Contempt and derision were added to blindness and injustice (xv. 16-20, 29-32), and the words of His own people were worse than the deeds of the Roman legionaries (Mark seems to know nothing of the repentant thief, xv. 32). But in their triumphant and sneering sarcasm the chief priests and scribes both paid Jesus the highest of all tributes and declared the truth concerning Jesus' fulfilment of His mission. The soldiers mocked Jesus as a make-believe King: Roman Emperors claimed divine honours and in that sense were

“worshipped” (xv. 19). Jesus refused to deaden either senses or mind at the moment of sharpest physical and mental suffering (xv. 23), another instance of His voluntary endurance of all that the situation involved, and a further evidence that He was not merely a passive victim of the inevitable consequences of men’s sin: He *conquered* sin and death.

The only CRY FROM THE CROSS recorded by Mark is that of utter loneliness (xv. 34). It has often been pointed out that these are the first words of Ps. xxii, which ends on the note of triumph. To believe, however, that Jesus used the words to express His feeling of utter dereliction is not to assert that God had in fact forsaken Him and that this was the final punishment for the sin of the world, laid upon Him. To the last He was Son of man no less than Son of God: in the human consciousness there are depths of conviction by which we live and go on, “despite ourselves,” in moments of great stress, when we are immediately aware only of blank discouragement or despair. Throughout His life Jesus had an immediate awareness of God’s presence such as no one else ever had. Faced by the full folly, shame and sin of the men whom He had come to save from themselves, and whom amidst it all He could not and would not give up (Luke xxiii. 34), He might well feel for the moment that He could not see His Father’s face, though He *knew* Himself to be secure in His Father’s purpose and power, as the final words recorded elsewhere show (Luke xxiii. 46).

The CENTURION’S TRIBUTE (xv. 39, *a Son of God*, R.V. marg.) does not imply the ascription of deity, any more than when a Jew spoke of a “son of God” he meant a person in the Godhead, even in the case of the Messiah. But it was the highest praise that either pagan or Jew could offer.

Mark puts it beyond doubt that JESUS WAS ACTUALLY

DEAD when He was taken from the Cross and laid in the tomb (xv. 44, 45; cf. the elaboration in John xix. 31-4). R.V. rightly renders the word used in xv. 45 (as in vi. 29) "corpse," where A.V. has "body." The Resurrection was not the reanimation of one who had never in fact died.

E. *The Resurrection: xvi. 1-20*

Mark's story of the RESURRECTION ends at xvi. 8. Probably the original MS. was torn off or worn away at that point, and xvi. 9-20 was subsequently added by an editor who may have compiled it from the other Gospels or composed it freely from current tradition. No writer of a book conveying good tidings of salvation would have ended "for they were afraid." Mark was pre-eminently the preacher's handbook, a setting forth of the *kerygma* or proclamation, as Q was the teacher's manual of the *didache* or instruction (cf. pp. 10, 157). Professor C. H. Dodd has shown that the *kerygma* is the same in the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts, St. Paul's writings, and the Johannine literature (see *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*). "The theme of Mark's Gospel is not simply the succession of events which ended in the crucifixion of Jesus. It is the theme of the *kerygma* as a whole" (*op. cit.*, pp. 104, 105). But that is not all: "Those 'saving facts,' the death and resurrection of Christ, are not merely particular facts of past history, however decisive in their effect; they are re-enacted in the experience of the Church" (*ibid.*, p. 147). The climax of Peter's defence on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 22-36) and of his summary of the good tidings, the *kerygma*, in Acts x. 36-43, is "Him God raised up," as it is of Paul's longer summary in Acts xiii, and of this, Peter adds "we are witnesses." Even if the original Mark, as we now have it, gives no

account of any actual appearance of Jesus after His resurrection (cf. Luke xxiv. 24, "Him they saw not"), and if much in the "substituted ending" (Mark xvi. 9-20) is not to be regarded as first-hand evidence but includes some sayings (xvi. 16-18) which we feel to be reflections of a later orthodoxy rather than characteristic of Jesus Himself, there can be no doubt that the reason why Mark wrote was to proclaim the life, death *and resurrection* of Jesus. xvi. 8 is typical of Mark's frankness and forthrightness; it therefore adds to the probability that xvi. 1-7 is a reliable record of unvarnished fact.

The New Testament evidence of the Resurrection is considered later (p. 253 *f.*; *Syllabus*, p. 65) when other Gospels are being studied. It is sufficient to say here that the accounts cannot be harmonised in detail, but that this very circumstance strengthens a body of testimony which might well be regarded (as it would be in a court of law) as suspect and probably collusive if all the witnesses said precisely the same thing in the same words. Differences may confirm rather than vitiate the value of evidence given by a variety of people from necessarily varying points of view. It has been said above that Mark's presentation of the *kerygma* is essentially one with that of the other New Testament writers, and includes the *fact* of the Resurrection. But even if all the records were lost there would still be the immensely powerful evidence supplied by the recovery of the Eleven and the other disciples from their despair (Luke xxiv. 19-25: perhaps the origin of Mark xvi. 12), and by the development and continuance of the Christian Church. The importance of this is enhanced by the insistence in Mark xvi. 9-20 upon the reluctance of the Eleven to believe in the Resurrection, even when they were told by the women and others that it had occurred.

For this reason it is held strongly by the compilers of the *Syllabus* that children ought not to be taught Mark or any other Gospel in isolation from the beginning of Acts, as though the story of Jesus were complete when the fact of His resurrection has been stated. From the literary and historical standpoint alone it is fairly evident that Luke intended his Gospel and the Acts to be read as continuous parts of one book. But it is equally true of Matthew and Mark, no less than of John, that the facts they record would never have been written down but for the meaning which these facts came to have in the changed lives and the new experience of relationship to God wherein the first Christians rejoiced and whereby the Christian Church came into existence. Consequently this first year's course includes, *of necessity*, the account in Acts of what led to the foundation of the Church.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES I-IV

Belief that the Gospel of Luke and Acts are two volumes in one book by the same author rests on the address to Theophilus, the general similarity of style, the "we" passages which indicate that the writer of the diary from which they come was with Paul during the period they cover and in style resemble the remainder of Acts, and so forth. If the author was Luke, "the beloved physician" and companion of Paul (Col. iv. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24), they are, with the possible exception of Hebrews, the only New Testament books written by a Gentile Christian. Like the Gospel, Acts appears to embody oral and literary material from a variety of sources. A possible date is 75-85 (Manson, *Companion to the Bible*, p. 117) though Findlay inclines to about 64 (*Acts*, p. 54). Some scholars divide the book into two, first an account of the primitive Church and

especially of the controversy about the admission of Gentiles (i-xv. 35), and then (xv. 36-end) an account of the spread of Christianity from Palestine through Gentile lands to Rome, the heart of the empire, whence it would radiate to "the end of the earth" (Acts i. 8). Others find in it traces of separate sets of stories—Acts of Peter, Acts of Philip and Stephen, Acts of Paul. It has been suggested that the book might have been written as a brief for Theophilus, Counsel for Paul's defence at Rome. Findlay draws attention to Luke's emphasis on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and Beck says, "The Acts is impressive as a record of testimonies to the reality of the Resurrection and to the power and presence of the risen Christ" (see *Acts*, p. xix, for a list of passages). J. A. Findlay's *Acts of the Apostles*, S.C.M. Press, 3s. 6d., is an excellent commentary for the teacher, as is Bishop Blunt's "Clarendon Bible," *Acts* (O.U.P., 5s.). Simpler and briefer commentaries are Blunt's *Acts* in the "School Clarendon Bible" (O.U.P. 2s. 6d.) and W. E. Beck's *Acts of the Apostles* (University Tutorial Press, 2s. 3d.).

The Beginnings of the Church

The Ascension of Christ: i. 1-14.

Luke has already stated the fact more simply in his Gospel (Luke xxiv. 51). Here we may have another version of THE ASCENSION which lays more stress upon the conception of "going up," inevitable in days when no one thought of the earth as anything but flat, with heaven or Olympus above and Sheol or Hades beneath. But "the story may mean simply that Christ disappeared much as He had disappeared on other occasions after His resurrection; they did not at the time know that He would not reappear, any more than they had known on the occasion of His other appearances.

But they soon realised (taught, as they said, by angels) that this had been the last appearance, and the Ascension was thus the 'sign' to them of a spiritual fact, of which they were convinced, viz. that Jesus was henceforth alive with God" (Blunt, "School Clarendon Bible," *Acts*, p. 101). The great fifteenth and sixteenth century Italian and Spanish painters had the same notion of the universe as the Hebrews and Greeks of Biblical and classical times. Their pictures have done much to fasten upon us a false idea (natural enough before modern scientific knowledge) of the *manner* of the Ascension. Pupils should grasp the *meaning* of what the New Testament says. The essential points are, first that the Twelve and the disciples were convinced that during these "forty days" Jesus had manifested Himself to them recognisably, not as a figment of their imaginations, or as a wraith; and then that after the Ascension they neither craved further appearances nor developed legendary accounts of them. The appearances before Pentecost transformed their incredulity about the Resurrection into positive certainty that Jesus had come again from the dead. During that period they had come to understand that He was now committing the cause of the Kingdom to them (*Acts* i. 6-8), but also that the spiritual energy by which He had carried on His ministry up to the time of His crucifixion should be imparted to them. This was what He meant at the Last Supper (*Mark* xiv. 22-4; *Luke* xxii. 19, 20; cf. Paul's explanation in *1 Cor.* x. 16, 17, xi. 23-7; cf. also *John* vi. 41-65). Jesus had mediated to them in His ministry not only the knowledge of God, but the very spirit and life which He shared with God, and now they should know in themselves the power of that Spirit in order that they might bear witness to God and His kingdom as present realities. The significant words in the story are God, the Kingdom, Christ, the Spirit,

witness, power. The story moreover is a necessary prelude to the account of Pentecost, for it connects the ecstasy then experienced by the Twelve with the historic fact of Jesus Christ, crucified, dead, buried, raised and alive with God—a very different thing from the merely emotional excitement common in many of the religious cults at that time.

The Election of Matthias: i. 15-26.

The account of Judas' death is alternative to Matt. xxvii. 3-10, and probably more accurate; Peter would know the facts. Peter's use of the Scriptures was characteristic of Jewish thought and argument and convincing to Jews: all things were ordered of God, and to His servants was given foreknowledge of events. But of course Peter and his contemporaries really turned from the events to Scripture to find the prognostication which they assumed: Ps. lxix. 25 and cix. 8 had nothing whatever to do with Judas or the Christian ministry. Prophecy (see p. 227) is a much deeper and more vital matter than foretelling. Note that Peter stresses Christ's resurrection and the witness to be borne by His followers (i. 22). Apostles must have not only first-hand knowledge of the Resurrection but knowledge of Jesus Himself throughout His ministry, since that alone could enable a man to understand the meaning of the message about the Cross, the Resurrection, the Kingdom and the Spirit (cf. Mark iii. 14, "that they might be with Him").

The Descent of the Spirit: ii. 1-13.

The Church was a worshipping fellowship before it could become, by receiving spiritual power, a witnessing body (i. 4, 14, ii. 1). Here again essential fact and meaning must be distinguished from incidental details,

regarding some of which there can be no certainty. Heroes and prophets of the Old Testament had known beyond question that their power to act and speak came when Yahweh sent His spirit upon them (2 Kings ii. 9; Isa. xlviii. 16; Ezek. ii. 2). The Hebrew word was *ruach*, wind, breath, spirit, and in the earlier, cruder times this was interpreted almost as a physical endowment from God (Num. xi. 17, 26; cf. Judges xiv. 6; 2 Sam. xxii. 30), while also it was accompanied in some cases by wild ecstasy (or the ecstasy was mistaken for the *ruach*; cf. 1 Sam. x. 10; 1 Chron. xii. 18). The Hebrew always laid more stress upon effect than upon cause. But later, among the great prophets and teachers, *ruach* was interpreted in terms of the intellectual, moral and spiritual life (Isa. lxi. 1; Job xxxii. 8). In the New Testament the word is *pneuma*, again meaning breath, wind, or spirit. By THE HOLY SPIRIT, which Jesus Christ mediates, God imparts to men His own energy of life, enhancing all their capacities and awakening new powers. At Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks, Harvest, see Lev. xxiii. 15 ff.) there would again be many Jews from all parts of the world at Jerusalem for the Feast—a great opportunity to spread the Good Tidings. The Twelve received inspiration and power to bear their witness, and demonstration also that all nations were capable of hearing and responding.

R.V. marg. has (ii. 3) "tongues parting among them like as of fire," but it is useless to speculate whether this was a visionary phenomenon or physical fact, and, if the latter, of what kind: the significance for them seems to have been that the fire symbolised purification and enkindling. The "OTHER TONGUES" with which they spoke were observable enough, and the experience was not unique (cf. Acts x. 46, xix. 6; cf. Mark xvi. 17). *Glossolalia*, or ecstatic babbling under the influence of uncontrolled emotion, was a frequent occurrence in

certain religious movements which flourished, chiefly in Asia Minor, at that time. Undoubtedly it took place on occasion among the early Christians and was valued by some as a proof of possession by the Holy Spirit, as it is still by obscure Christian sects which produce it by means of emotional meetings and unconscious suggestion on the part of leaders and teachers. Paul (1 Cor. xii-xiv) utters a warning against the dangers of this, though he does not say that it is worthless or wrong. Where it was (or is) a spontaneous experience arising from intense and uncontrolled ecstasy of religious feeling, it is well described as "the ecstatic utterance of unintelligible sounds of praise or prayer which needed interpretation" (Blunt, "School Clarendon Bible," *Acts*, p. 103). The fact that Peter and the apostles were charged with drunkenness, because their speech was incoherent (and perhaps their gestures unusual) seems to point to *glossolalia* of this kind, and many, though not all, scholars take that view. In any case it is more than unlikely that the gift of utterance at Pentecost was the gift of speaking foreign languages: Greek or Aramaic would be spoken or at least understood by most if not all of those present.

The First Preaching of the Gospel: ii. 14-40.

Those addressed were Jews or proselytes. This may be one reason for the appeal to prophet and psalmist (see p. 160). It has been suggested that the long SPEECHES IN ACTS were put by the author into the mouths of those to whom they are ascribed, as Thucydides puts speeches into the mouths of the great men in his historical writings. Probably the truth lies somewhere between this and the untenable idea that Luke's reports are verbatim. The speeches certainly represent what was thought and said by the earliest Christians in proclaiming Christ to the world.

Acts ii. 23 does not mean that Jesus was doomed by God to be crucified, but that in submitting to suffering and death as the way of rebuking sin and manifesting the deathless love and power of God, He was fulfilling the redemptive purpose of God.

The ascription to David of prophetic foreknowledge (ii. 30) is an extravagance, and the words quoted from Psalms are applied after the event. The point is that Jesus alone fulfils both Psalms xvi and cx. Note that Peter's hearers apparently did not contest his assertion that Jesus had risen from the dead and that this fact was the sole and sufficient explanation of the apostles' experience and mission.

The Fellowship of Believers: ii. 41-7.

Opinions differ as to whether ii. 42 indicates two, three, or four forms of worship and community life. The BREAKING OF BREAD was probably the *agape*, or common meal in a religious atmosphere (cf. the *kiddush*, p. 57) at the end of which the Lord's Supper was celebrated, at any rate on the first day of the week, though later the two were separated (so both Blunt, "School Clarendon Bible," *Acts*, p. 104, and Findlay, *Acts*, p. 69; for one reason why the separation became necessary cf. 1 Cor. xi. 20-34). THE PRAYERS would include Temple services, which the Christians still attended, as well as the meetings for worship which they held in their own houses (cf. Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 19 and see p. 196).

The "COMMUNISM" of ii. 44 was apparently not an organised system of communal ownership but a brotherly refusal to allow anyone to go in want while others had enough and to spare (Acts iv. 34-5). Apparently it was confined to the Church in Jerusalem, which subsequently became so poor that Paul obtained gifts for it from the Gentile churches (Acts

xxiv. 17; cf. p. 259). For "fear" (ii. 43) Moffatt reads "awe." In their exaltation of spirit awe and timorousness were mingled.

Healing in the name of Jesus: iii. 1-10.

MIRACLE PERSISTED in the early Church but apparently all the instances were miracles of healing. Look up the general references in ii. 43, iv. 30, and the specific instances in other chapters: cf. Rom. x. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12; Heb. ii. 4. The Apostles regarded this as Peter does here, first as evidence that Jesus Christ was alive, and that these were manifestations of His power ("name" is practically equivalent in Hebrew thought to personal being) working by His Spirit through those devoted to Him, and then as part of the "witness" to men and women not yet Christian. Faith on the part of the subject was essential. While some of the stories may well have been elaborated by tradition, there is no reason to doubt that such "signs" of Christ's presence and "wonders" (unusual events with religious significance) did occur. See, on Miracle in general, pp. 21 ff., 29 ff.

Peter and John Preach the Gospel to the people: iii. 11-26.

Peter seized the occasion again to declare, not only the Lordship of Jesus, but His Messiahship in fulfilment of Jewish expectation, and the challenge which Jesus Himself had made during the final week of His life. Jesus did fulfil "the Law and the Prophets" in the sense that He was the climax of a progressive revelation, though Moses had no thought of a Messiah.

Peter and John testify before the Sanhedrin: iv. 1-12. The Courage of Peter and John: iv. 13-22.

Presumably the Sanhedrin supposed that to get rid of Jesus and suppress all rumours or evidences of His

reappearance (cf. Matt. xxviii. 11-15) would disillusion the people among whom He had been popular, and end the danger of heresy and sedition. They had apparently paid little or no attention previously to His followers—Peter and John seem to have been unknown to them (Acts iv. 13). Now, when they began to realise that the movement was still alive and active, they proceeded with caution (Acts iv. 17-18). But the Apostles were insistent in their witness and unanswerable in their challenge (iv. 15-20). Acts iv. 23-31 shows how the enthusiastic little community began to be aware that its new and glorious experience would bring upon it opposition and perhaps persecution. But again the emphasis is upon the fact that Jesus Christ has risen and is with His people (Acts iv. 33: Harnack regarded iv. 31 as a brief alternative account of Pentecost).

For their "Communism," see pp. 73, 258. Joseph Barnabas' sale of a field is in dramatic contrast with Judas' purchase (Acts i. 18).

Almost any point in this story of the risen Christ working in His Spirit in the early Church might be taken as the conclusion of this First Year Course. The impression with which boys and girls should finish their year's work is that Jesus Christ is a living Lord, whose life, death, and resurrection as told in Mark were but the beginning of a continuous divine activity among men which still goes on, so that to round off the story neatly would be a mistake. Eager desire to pursue it should be the natural feeling with which they leave the story now.

FIRST YEAR: II +

II. THE PATRIARCHAL AGE TO THE EXILE

The Promise to the Fathers.

The Hebrew writers, whether historians, prophets or poets, are continually recalling to their people two great facts—the deliverance from Egypt and the golden days of the Kingdom under David. These were historic assurances that the Hebrews were a people of destiny, emancipated from slavery for a purpose, called by God to serve Him and mankind. But all this interpretation of their own history rested upon faith in the promises of God to them as a people, promises that sprang from His loving-kindness yet involved obligations for them: they were **THE PEOPLE OF THE COVENANT**. Behind the story of the great deliverance lay the earlier facts of their emergence as a people, and about these facts there had gathered tales of a legendary kind, handed down by the oral tradition of centuries. The facts are part of world history: they were not the inventions of folklore to explain the origin of human life and the ordinary phenomena of experience. The Hebrews, like the Babylonians and other peoples, of course had such explanatory myths, but the Hebrew stories, unlike all others, proclaimed that God, and not mere “forces of Nature” or arbitrary and non-moral gods and demons, had brought the world into existence. These myths survive in the first few chapters of Genesis. But with Abraham we pass to the legends which have a core of fact, just as with Moses and the Exodus we reach the beginning of what may fairly be called history in the ordinary sense of that word. In

Genesis, those stories which tell of Abraham's call and of God's covenant with him are the most significant, because in and through him God created the Hebrew people and entered into this special relationship with them. See special Note in *Syllabus*, pp. 120-4.

Some scholars have suggested that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the rest were really personified tribes rather than individuals, but it is now generally held that they were actual men (Oesterley and Robinson, *History of Israel*, I, p. 54). Recent excavations have not only afforded considerable confirmation of the facts upon which the Genesis stories are based, but have yielded an immense amount of material from which the historical background can be reconstructed. We know a great deal about the kind of civilisation near, if not amidst, which Abraham's immediate ancestors must have lived. *Children of the Wilderness*, by Gurney (O.U.P., 3s. 6d.), depicts this in graphic stories, and Woolley's books, *Ur of the Chaldees* and *Digging up the Past* (Pelican, 6d.), contain many photographs of objects recovered: see also *Bible and Spade*, Caiger (O.U.P., 5s.). Various motives may have impelled Terah and his clan to migrate round the "Fertile Crescent" to Haran; among these no doubt were economic pressure and desire to get away from a civilisation which was becoming decadent. But deepest was this mysterious religious impulse, a feeling that the greatest adventure upon which they were set was a fuller knowledge and a worthier service of God.

Though Abraham did not always connect morality with religion or rise above the morality of his time, he was supremely conscious of a covenant relationship with a God whom he knew, to whom he could pray, and upon whom he could depend (Gen. xvii). And, like any oriental head of a clan, but with special clearness, he saw the meaning of his own life and

prosperity in the great future which, under God, should be the portion of his descendants. He was literally the father of the Hebrew people—a people whose chief possession was their religion. THE COVENANT must be solemnly renewed by every individual of the male line. Circumcision was the physical sign that life, with all its powers, was pledged to the God of the Covenant.

The drawing of Jacob's character is true to life—as indeed are all the patriarchal stories. But the object of the writers of Genesis is to show the hand of God, and His faithfulness, in the history of the people, despite their unworthiness and forgetfulness of what the Covenant demanded of them. The imagery of the ladder (perhaps suggested by the sight of steps leading up to a "high place" or *Ziggurat*: see Woolley, Plate ix, or Caiger, ill., p. 29), and the angels in JACOB'S DREAM must not be allowed to obscure the great truth that Jacob, a deceiver, afraid and a fugitive, yet had borne in upon him the fact that he was heir to the promises of God, with a vital part to play in carrying on the life of a chosen community. The very words expressing Abraham's supreme conviction arise again in Jacob's mind (xxviii. 14-15). The story of Jacob is the story of the victorious grace of God.

The belief in angels was probably ancient, though it came prominently into Jewish religious thought after contact with Persian religion in the time of Cyrus, and this passage comes from the latest of the component documents of Genesis (P, *cir.* 400 B.C.: see p. 113). Jacob's vow (xxviii. 20 *f.*) may seem to us mercenary, but we must remember the man's temperament, the still primitive and concrete character of religion, and the fact that a covenant was an interchange of promises and conditions.

A cycle of stories gathers about each patriarchal

hero. Sometimes, as in the case of JOSEPH, there is more than one tradition, and the variants have been preserved side by side in the differing documents pieced together after the Eastern fashion in the Pentateuch (cf. the differing accounts of how Joseph's brethren got rid of him in Gen. xxxvii. 25, 28*a*, 28*b*, 36, xxxix. 1). The Joseph legends make a link between Abraham, prosperous in Southern Palestine, and those of his descendants who became bondslaves in Egypt. Probably some remained in Palestine. The selection of Joseph stories given in the *Syllabus* suffices to carry on the story of the Hebrews. Again the over-ruling providence of God is vividly illustrated. There is poetic justice in the deceiving of Jacob, the erstwhile deceiver, and some insight into the way in which God utilises even the jealousy and malignancy of the brethren to provide for the survival of the Hebrew people. Joseph's dream would have been provocative enough to evoke their resentment even if Jacob's apparent favouritism had not already sowed the seeds of trouble. His later dealings with his brothers and his father show what adversity and responsibility had made of him.

Chapter xlv brings in again the typical genealogical description of tribal relationships. Goshen was the fertile land between the Nile delta and Southern Palestine. Egypt was at this time under the rule of a foreign dynasty (the Hyksos, expelled 1580 B.C.), more likely than the preceding and succeeding dynasties to be favourable to such immigrants as the Israelites. ("Pharaoh" is an official title, not a name.)

The Exodus.

While Abraham founded a people, MOSES was the pioneer of their development as a free and independent nation, and the prophet who gave them clear knowledge

of the character and purpose of Yahweh, their God: he was far more than "Lawgiver."

Some eminent scholars still hold that Ramses II (1300-1233 B.C.) and Merneptah (1233-1223 B.C.) were the Pharaohs with whom Moses dealt, and regard the reference to store cities (Exod. i. 11) as important. To many others Professor Garstang's excavations at Jericho supply evidence for dating the fall of the city about 1400 B.C., and the Exodus between forty and fifty years earlier; the Pharaohs concerned would then be Thothmes III and Amenhotep II. This fits in with the Biblical chronology and also with the fact that in the middle of the fifteenth century the foreign and more liberal line of Pharaohs was replaced by the true Egyptian succession—a Pharaoh arose who "knew not Joseph." (For a full note see Caiger, pp. 191 f.)

The long history of the Jews in Europe as well as in Asia presents many parallels to the social and political situation of the Hebrews in Egypt in Moses' time. Before he knew the secret of his own nationality Moses' conscience was stirred. His flight to Midian brought him into contact with a conception of God far nobler than Egyptian worship afforded. He must have meditated upon what the priest-king Jethro (Exod. iii. 1, xviii. 10-12) taught him, as well as upon what he had seen and heard of Hebrew religion in Egypt. Palestine was then under the domination of Egypt, as the Tel-el-Amarna tablets—correspondence between the Egyptian court and Egyptian government officials in Palestine—of a few years later serve to show. Moses took refuge in the country south of Palestine and north or north-east of the Sinai peninsula—rugged, but with fertile tracts. Horeb was one of the most impressive of the mountains in a region whose austerity contrasted sharply with the Nile delta, and Moses' mind must have been impressed with a new sense of awe, as well

as invigorated by the sense of independence and hardihood which mountainous countries seem to produce in those who live there.

His vision of THE BURNING BUSH may perhaps be explained on the basis of rare but not unique light effects, or the occurrence of a plant with peculiar characteristics still to be seen in certain places (cf. Golding, *In the Steps of Moses the Lawgiver*, pp. 98-100). The important fact was that under the stimulus of this experience, which to him may well have appeared miraculous, Moses, like Abraham and Jacob, became aware of God in a new way. In his people's condition Moses sees a call to himself which is more than a matter of pity or patriotism, and the God who confirms that call promises all needed strength and guidance. At the same time he conceives of Palestine, where Abraham once dwelt, a place now prosperous but pagan, as the ideal country for a traditionally pastoral and agricultural people such as the Hebrews.

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of the character and purpose of Yahweh, their God: he was far more than "Lawgiver."

Some eminent scholars still hold that Ramses II (1300-1233 B.C.) and Merneptah (1233-1223 B.C.) were the Pharaohs with whom Moses dealt, and regard the reference to store cities (Exod. i. 11) as important. To many others Professor Garstang's excavations at Jericho supply evidence for dating the fall of the city about 1400 B.C., and the Exodus between forty and fifty years earlier; the Pharaohs concerned would then be Thothmes III and Amenhotep II. This fits in with the Biblical chronology and also with the fact that in the middle of the fifteenth century the foreign and more liberal line of Pharaohs was replaced by the true Egyptian succession—a Pharaoh arose who "knew not Joseph." (For a full note see Caiger, pp. 191 f.)

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substituted for it. The Hebrew writers used only consonantal forms, without vowels, and the illogical and unmeaning addition to the consonants J H W H of the vowels taken from Adonai has given us the "Jehovah" of the English version. Yahweh was more probably the true original and is represented in R.V. by the words, in capitals, THE LORD. Distinction in the Pentateuch between passages which use this title for God and those which use "God" (Heb. *Elohim*, the "plural of majesty") was one of the clues to the discovery of the J and E documents as woven into these books (p. 113). The name means "I will be that I will be" and not only "I am that I am." It implies absolute, personal existence, but also conveys a sense of inexhaustible resource. Man cannot by searching find out God, but His wisdom and power are perpetually being unfolded in the experience of men. He is sufficient both for their present need and for everything that the unseen future may bring.

Moses' conception of God was still limited. It was henotheist (worshipping one god as supreme), not monotheist (believing in an only God). The thought of Him as the only God does not emerge till the time of the Exile, a thousand years later, but Moses made Him known as specifically the God of the Hebrews, bound to them by mutual covenant, and the greatest of all gods not only in power, but in character (see p. 215).

Where we might say "Providence" or even "coincidence" the Hebrew saw MIRACLE. The "plagues" are omitted from the *Syllabus* because they are relatively unimportant. So unusual, if natural, a sequence of physical phenomena (cf. Golding, pp. 104-10) would be regarded both by Israelites and by Egyptians as portents, direct interventions of Yahweh. The "spoiling" of the Egyptians (xii. 35, 36) at THE EXODUS is a mingling of rough justice (the Egyptians owed the

Israelites more than this after years of forced labour), prudence (the Israelites needed something wherewith to purchase supplies on their journey), and primitive ideas of God (facilitating the exploitation of the terror-stricken Egyptians).

As Abraham had associated circumcision with the Covenant, so Moses established the PASSOVER FEAST with its unleavened bread and the dedication of the firstborn and firstfruits as reminders of God's great deliverance and the people's obligation to devote all they have and are to His service. The origin of phylacteries is given here (xiii. 9, 16). To this day the celebration of the Passover in every Jewish household begins with the youngest son's asking the question in xiii. 14. It is reasonable to suppose that in the case of the pillar of cloud and fire, as in that of the plagues, natural phenomena had for the Israelites a religious significance and rightly, since God works in and through Nature.

In MOSES' SONG OF TRIUMPH (xv) will be found many phrases that recur in the Psalms. The place was the "Sea of Reeds," not the Red Sea or the Gulf of Suez or the Gulf of Akaba. Some scholars think that the Israelites followed a route not far from the seacoast to the east of the Nile delta, but more believe that they went across the marsh and lake-covered country north of the Gulf of Suez, and that the crossing took place either at Lake Timsah or at the Bitter Lakes. (For geographical description see Golding, *Moses the Law-giver*, pp. 139-41.) Phenomena similar to those of Exod. xiv. 21 have been recorded, in particular in the Jordan, during the present century when a fall of rock higher up the river checked the flow of water and left a dry crossing for about a day: but for the Hebrew the hand of God was in so providential a happening.

Despite the ancient tradition that SINAI was Jebel Musa, in the south of the Sinai peninsula, there is good reason for believing that it was identical with Horeb, where Moses had seen the burning bush. Here the Covenant was renewed and from prolonged waiting upon Yahweh ("forty days and forty nights" is a conventional round number) in the holy mount Moses returned to the people with THE "TEN WORDS" which asserted the connection between religion and morals and became the foundation of the Law. In other religions worship and conduct were independent of each other. But Yahweh was righteous as well as holy, and required in His people a character akin to His own. The successive expansions of the Ten Words until, generations later, they took the fully elaborated form which we know as "the Ten Commandments," or DECALOGUE can be traced by comparing Exod. xxxiv. 10-26; Exod. xx. 1-17 and Deut. v. 6-21. "The finger of God" (xxx. 18) is as figurative as the voice or the face of God: cf. Exod. xxxiv. 28. Recent discoveries at Ras Shamra reveal the fact that a form of Hebrew script was used at least as early as the time of Moses, and in the Louvre may be seen the stone on which the Babylonian Hammurabi's Code of Laws was inscribed at least 500 years earlier.

The Israelites were still in the mood of excitement, impatience, and desire for security naturally resulting from so tremendous an experience as their recent deliverance. They began to doubt whether their leader was already lost to them. Many peoples in that part of the world worshipped power and fertility as symbolised by a bull. The Israelites caught at this possible source of reassurance and strength, made a GOLDEN CALF, and abandoned themselves to pagan feasting. The reply of Moses was a magnificent CHALLENGE TO DECIDE for or against Yahweh (xxxii. 26).

The story of his dire and dreadful punishment of those who persisted in disloyalty does not come into the *Syllabus*. It is typical of the still primitive conception of God beyond which even Moses did not pass; but we may notice that the Hebrew notion of Yahweh's implacable wrath against those who rejected Him was not merely a form of tribal antagonism. It was visited upon His own people not less than upon their national enemies, as in the case of the command to Hazael, Jehu and Elisha (1 Kings xix. 17). But it is a pity to omit the revealing story of MOSES' PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE—one of the noblest and most moving passages in the Old Testament (Exod. xxxii. 30-2).

Moses' picture of THE PROMISED LAND (Deut. viii. 1-18) is almost idyllic, but settled conditions in a fertile country might well seem so in contrast with the experience of years amidst sandy deserts and rocky mountains, with the cruel slavery in Egypt as a background. The dominant note is "Remember!" The deliverance and the Covenant were always in the minds of the Prophets, and the besetting sin of the Israelites, even generations later, was forgetfulness and self-sufficiency (viii. 11-14, 18).

The visit of the spies confirmed Moses' description, but revealed also the difficulties of conquest. Excavations have brought to light not only skeletons of Canaanites of that period who certainly were unusually tall, but also the remains of "fortified cities"—little more than villages, perhaps, but surrounded by strong stone walls.

The tragedy of Moses is poignant but his spirit is magnificent, and his final appeal to his people to remember the Covenant and keep the commandments of Yahweh is a great utterance of faith in the purpose and the faithfulness of God—and thus in the mission and destiny of the nation.

The Conflict with the Canaanites.

From a nomad clan drawn into occasional rough-and-tumble conflicts with other companies of herdsmen and shepherds, the Israelites had now become a group of fighting tribes, bent first and foremost upon securing, each for itself, a new home in the land of promise. Their independence of each other and yet their loose unity are made clear in the account of the conquest given in the book of Judges, which is the earlier and more reliable source: the later story, in the book of Joshua, represents them as an organised army, moving steadily and solidly westwards into Canaan with Joshua as their head. It is important to use a map (see *Syllabus*, p. 145, "Maps") when dealing with this period, so that the distribution of the tribes may be understood, otherwise the significance of David's achievement will not be clear. This section ought not to be treated (as English history used to be) merely as a record of battles. The settlement of the Northmen, followed by the Normans, in England, affords a good parallel in many respects. Emphasis should lie upon the contrast between the types of people involved and the characters of the Jewish hero-leaders.

JOSHUA led them into possession of a land of their own—at last. His sense of a God-given mission is magnificently expressed in Joshua i. 1-11.

Abraham came out from Ur that he might find a place where he could worship God more truly: Moses led the people out of Egypt with the same dominant purpose: the aim of the conquest of Canaan was that in a country of their own the people should worship and serve Yahweh in freedom and as He required of them.

FOR THE HITTITES see Caiger, pp. 98 ff., and for fuller treatment Kenyon, *The Bible and Archæology*, ch. 4,

(Harrap, 155.) Their Indo-European civilisation dominated Asia Minor and Syria in much the same way as the Sumerian, and later the Babylonian, was supreme in Asia Minor. In the thirteenth century they contested Egyptian influence in Palestine (as the Tel-el-Amarna tablets indicate) and their empire fell at the beginning of the twelfth century when the power of the Philistines extended from the west. The references to them in the Genesis stories of Abraham and Isaac are anachronisms. Joshua had to do with a mixed group settled in the hill-country of Judah, while the "Kings of the Hittites" in Solomon's time (2 Kings vii. 6) were yet another branch. The religion of the true Hittites was "more Asiatic than Aryan," and centred in the worship of the mother Cybele and her husband-son Atys, one of the pagan cults against which the Hebrew prophets protested when, after the settlement in Canaan, the Hebrew people tended to absorb into the worship of Yahweh the practices of the prosperous pagan inhabitants.

In the story of THE SPIES (Joshua ii) there is the curious mixture of deceit and loyalty which still marked the primitive religion and morals of the time. The oath of the spies to protect their informant was sacred—unless she betrayed them (ii. 20).

The "ARK OF THE COVENANT" (Joshua iii. 3) was the chest containing the sacred objects which were not only the tangible evidence that Yahweh was with them but were almost regarded as a dwelling-place of His power (cf. primitive fetichism). The Hebrew religion grew, as God revealed Himself "by divers portions and in divers manners," from the cruder to the more spiritual conception of God's presence.

"The priests, the Levites" (iii. 3): the two orders were not separated till nearly a thousand years later, when the Jews returned from captivity, but there was

no doubt a distinction of function within the priesthood much earlier.

The miracle of THE CROSSING OF THE JORDAN repeats that of the Exodus (cf. p. 83).

Garstang's discovery of traces of collapse and fire, probably due to earthquake, and the nature of objects dug from this stratum of the ruins, are important reasons for dating the FALL OF JERICHO, in which again the Hebrews saw the hand of God, at about 1400 B.C. (For discussion of the alternative "late" dating see Caiger, pp. 95, 196, and Wheeler Robinson, *The History of Israel*, pp. 31 ff. Duckworth, 5s.)

The story of the MASSACRE AT AI (Joshua viii) is plainly a record of ruthless "frightfulness," and even if the numbers are exaggerated (as often in Hebrew writings) the essence of the incident remains the same, and it is not exceptional. Unquestionably the Hebrews felt, acted, and believed during the periods of conquest and monarchy as this chapter indicates. Pupils are old enough at this stage, however, to face and understand the facts, and it is important for their later development that they should grasp sooner or later (not all in the course of one lesson!) the following truths:

(i) The existence of such stories in the Bible is an evidence of the fidelity of inspired writers to fact. They were not meticulous about detail (e.g. numbers, date, etc.); they were concerned with the religious significance of history: but writing at a time when this earlier conception of God's nature and purpose had already been transcended (e.g. Jonah and the inhabitants of Nineveh), the final editors of the Old Testament did not hesitate to preserve stories which showed what that conception once was. Without the Old Testament as it is we could not properly understand that revelation has been progressive—men have had to *grow* in the knowledge of God. These "difficult" stories help to

bring home by concrete example truths which children cannot easily apprehend in the abstract.

(ii) The Hebrews were fighting for their lives as a people and for their tribal religion. To them at that stage compromise seemed fatal: they believed in the real existence and power of the pagan god, who therefore must be exterminated by the slaying of his worshippers.

(iii) Their religion demanded obedience to the voice of Yahweh. Pupils may need to be reminded that God did not appear in bodily form and speak audible words. To-day we should say "My conscience tells me . . . I am quite convinced that . . ." But conscience needs education, and means must be worthy of ends.

(iv) God has always been the same as He is now and always will be. What He is we know through and in Jesus Christ. We should not be shocked at stories like this if we had not the New Testament interpretation of God by which to judge. As compared with pagan leaders Joshua knew and acted upon more of the truth than they possessed. Men are to be judged by the light they have. We to-day cannot do what he did then and escape condemnation.

The story of ACHAN is probably a "cautionary tale" introduced by the Deuteronomic editor of Joshua to emphasise the penalty of disobedience to the Deuteronomic Law. The fact that Achan's whole family suffered with him accords with the Deuteronomic conception of the nation or clan or family rather than the individual as the moral unit. It was not till the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel that the idea of individual responsibility developed in Hebrew religious thought. Like the story of Ai the story of Achan is best used to show the rigour of early Hebrew moral and religious conceptions as contrasted with the later view that a man must do justly and at the same time love mercy

because "with God is forgiveness, that He may be feared" (not dreaded, as an implacable lawgiver and despotic king).

The story of the GIBEONITES (Joshua ix) has a humour of its own when read in conjunction with that of the spies and Rahab. Observance of the general principle of loyalty to the sacredness of oaths brings about a turning of the tables. But it reveals one of the distinguishing features of the Hebrews: they could not break their promises, because their morality was rooted in their religion: light oaths were prohibited, but a serious pledge was given before God.

Various versions of these stories, coming from different periods, have been combined: thus in vii. 25 the first half of the verse says that Achan was stoned, and the second that his family and even his cattle were stoned with him. It is on this kind of evidence that belief in the presence of several sources side by side in the Hexateuch (the Pentateuch plus Joshua) rests, and even young adolescents who notice the discrepancies will be ready to understand the explanation.

Joshua ix. 1 should not be passed by as a mere jingle of names. When the Hebrews came into Canaan it had already undergone a series of conquests or partial conquests, each of which had contributed something to the admixture of blood and the development of civilisation and religion among the people. "Canaan" and "Canaanite" in the broad sense include all these subdivisions, of which "Canaanite," as used in ix. 1, is but one. Here again the use of a map is important. The Hebrews were not a homogeneous column marching against a homogeneous population. Compare again England between the sixth and eleventh centuries A.D.

The story of Jael and Sisera (Judges iv, v) carries us on to the time when the Hebrews, though settled in Canaan, were not yet masters of it and were not yet

unified. The root of the word "judge" contains the meaning not only of discrimination between right and wrong but also of governing, vindicating, and delivering. In this last sense, particularly, Deborah was a judge. The book of Judges, like that of Joshua, was edited by a later Deuteronomic scribe, but different accounts of the same event were left side by side—in this case a prose version, which was the later, and a poetic one which probably comes from the actual time of the incident which it celebrates and is almost certainly THE OLDEST POEM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT (except perhaps "The Song of the Well," Num. xxi. 17-18). (See Gore's *Commentary*, pp. 203f.) The Deuteronomic religious reformers' interpretation of history emerges at the outset of the story—"The children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord": this was the only explanation of political reverses that the Deuteronomic prophets and writers of the sixth century could imagine. The punishment of religious disloyalty was subjugation to their neighbours: according to S. R. Driver "sold" means "He has, for some sufficient cause, designedly cast them off." The story goes on to describe a concerted effort to seize and hold the Plain of Esdraelon, the most strategic position in the country, and praises or denounces the tribes as they rallied to this or refused.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH ("prophetess" in the same sense as Moses was prophet, declaring God's purpose for the people) is difficult in some details, though the purport is clear. It should be read in R.V., with close attention to the revisers' marginal renderings, or in some such translation as Moffatt's.

Jael's treachery was the worst conceivable defiance of the Eastern unwritten law of hospitality, by which a guest has all the rights of sanctuary. But it is another instance of the way in which the passion of the Hebrews

for Yahweh, the God of righteousness and holiness of life, not only seemed to them to justify the extermination of the Nature-gods of Canaan with their licentious rites, and therefore of the people who worshipped them, but also caused them to regard Yahweh as God of Battles in the Hebrew political struggle for a land to dwell in and freedom from oppressors.

The tale of GIDEON is in some ways a parallel, from the southern country, to the northern story of Jael. The nature of the Hebrews' sin is more apparent (vi. 10): from the time of their settlement in Canaan till the Exile the tendency to assimilate themselves, especially in worship, to the pagan inhabitants was repeatedly the cause of their condemnation and suffering. Possibly a stranger talking to Gideon uttered a warning and a challenge which Gideon later recognised to be of God (vi. 11, 22). The direct call of God comes to Gideon within his own heart (vi. 25). "BAAL" was a generic name for the pagan gods—generally Nature-deities, gods of springs and mountains, of the seasons and of fertility, worshipped in sacred groves or at sacred trees and "high places," or stone altars. An ASHERAH was a pole, set up by the altar, to represent such a "grove." The double "sign" was of a kind to which the Hebrews, like all who practise primitive or pagan religions, not seldom had recourse (cf. Roman "auspices").

The stratagem which secured victory for the Hebrews was clever, but, like the dream that Gideon heard related, the victory and all that led to it were in God's ordering (vii. 9-11, viii. 3). The secret of Gideon's courage lay in his faith, and therein he was for the Hebrew historian the true type of his people.

The Samson stories introduce a new aspect of the Hebrews' struggle for security. The PHILISTINES were invaders whose attacks on Palestine (to which they

gave their name) began about 1200 B.C., two centuries later than the Hebrews invaded it from the East. They were among the "sea-peoples" who, coming from the North-west, broke up the Hittite empire and settled on the south coast of Syria. They were not Semitic: probably they brought with them the relatively advanced civilisation of Crete (the "Caphtor" of Amos ix. 7), but they seem to have adopted the customs and language of the Canaanites. Their deities were Semitic, e.g. Dagon the corn-god, Atargatis of Ashkelon, an equivalent of Astarte, Baal-zebul of Ekron. (See Wheeler Robinson, *The History of Israel*, pp. 48 ff.) As they pressed forward into the country they were bound to come into conflict with the Hebrews, now seeking to become undisputed masters of its various parts. The Philistines had more modern weapons (iron) than the Hebrews, and were more virile than most of the older inhabitants of Canaan.

The SAMSON stories are typical hero-legends, no doubt with a core of truth. They purport to account for the growing mutual hatred of Philistine and Hebrew, but while they lay stress on physical strength they treat this, as Hebrews always did, as a gift from God, whose spirit (*ruach*) came upon men as physical reinforcement (Judges xiv. 6) no less than as mental and spiritual illumination. The details of Samson's exploits and amours, even in the sections included in the *Syllabus*, are not edifying. Apart, however, from the fact that Samson has become proverbial, the stories are not to be ignored, because they reflect the earliest phases of the struggle between the two invading people, and reveal the connection which the Hebrew saw between religion and bodily vigour. The Nazirite vow (Num. vi. 1-12) was not only one of abstinence and self-discipline, but one of dedication: the unshorn head was a sign of "separation" unto God. Apparently the vow could be

for a period (cf. Acts xxi. 24) or lifelong. The purpose in Samson's case was fitness to serve God by saving his people (Judges xiii. 5). His strength, it is clear, was not in his hair but in the devotion to the service of God which it represented (xvi. 17).

It is worth noting that in Judges xiii. "a man of God" is also "the angel of God": "angel" is of course "messenger" (see R.V. marg.).

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL AND KINGS contain many writings, or extracts from writings, which were composed in the days of Samuel, Saul, David and the succeeding kings, down to the period of the Exile, thus covering some five or six centuries. These two books "rank high among ancient writings for historical fidelity" (Professor H. H. Rowley: *Religion in Education*, January, 1940).

Samson's exploits did little to stay Philistine aggression and dominance. The bringing of the Ark of the Covenant into the camp (1 Sam. iv) was in part a delayed recognition that the only true resource and hope of the Hebrews was in the presence of God with them: it was partly an evidence that their religion was still largely superstitious, and that they thought that Yahweh in some way literally had his dwelling-place in or above the Ark (iv. 4, R.V. marg., "dwelleth between the cherubim"). The Philistines recognised the existence of Yahweh as the tribal god of the Hebrews: the only question for them was whether he was more powerful than their own gods.

Facts discredited the superstition of the Hebrews: the unbelievable happened and the Ark was captured. The shock killed Eli. Like all the peoples of Palestine and Syria at that time the Philistines were syncretistic (i.e. minglers of religions) and were prepared to add the gods of other nations to their own. They thought they would thus gain a share in the strength or prosperity

which these other nations owed to their respective gods. Chapter v may be a legend or it may be a record of coincidences which the Philistines and the Hebrews alike interpreted as miracle. Chapter vi. 3-5, suggests the belief in sympathetic magic, whereby primitive people suppose that imitation or dramatisation of a desired effect or event, if accompanied by the appropriate incantations, will bring it about (e.g. "making rain"). Remarkable stones, trees, wells and springs were thought by the Hebrews to have religious significance; in this the Hebrews had an affinity with the Nature-worship of the Canaanites which led them (cf. the story of Gideon) to worship at "high places" and "groves." This TENDENCY TO SYNCRETISM AND NATURE-WORSHIP (licentious when connected with fertility of fields and flocks, again through "sympathetic magic") was most marked when the Hebrews were at peace with their neighbours and were thinking most about material prosperity: vii. 2-3 brings this out. SAMUEL the Seer strikes the true prophetic note, urging that the root of their unhappiness was their sin in not cleaving to Yahweh only, as the first of the Ten Words demanded: they worshipped the Canaanite gods (*baalim*, Heb. plural of *baal*).

The Monarchy.

Samuel's work as Judge is constantly related to the worship centred at Shiloh (in the hill-country of Ephraim, north-west of Gilgal), the chief sanctuary of the Hebrews from the time of their entry into Canaan till the close of Samuel's life. There the Ark was kept until, after being taken into the camp and captured by the Philistines, it was brought back to Kirjath-jearim. The "house of the Lord," in Joshua xviii. 1 a "tent of meeting," is here (1 Sam. i. 3, 7, 9, iii. 3) called by an anachronism, a "temple." But the sense of the direct

spiritual communication with God had declined, (iii. 1, R.V. marg.: "open" is "widely spread"). The mind and spirit of Samuel were sensitive and open to God, and he saw everything that happened from that point of view, speaking consequently with prophetic insight God's message for those times (iv. 1). The voice of God was the "inner voice" (also described as a vision) in Samuel's heart (iii. 1-15). For i. 16, ii. 12, see R.V. marg. The thumb-nail sketch of Eli's sons (ii. 12-17) contrasts with the picture of Samuel, and indicates the condition of professionalised religion at that time.

Here also we have differing accounts of the same events, retained side by side. In viii. 5-22 (probably the later) the people demand a king, declaring that Samuel's energy and authority have waned, his sons are unworthy and they are conscious of political and military weakness because they are not governed by a king as surrounding nations of greater power and prosperity are. Samuel's protest is religious. God is the king of Israel: to reject the rule of judge, seer and prophet, through whom God speaks, is to reject God (viii. 6-7). But God's way is to let His people learn by experience (cf. Num. xi), which is one reason why prophets see His controlling hand in national adversity as well as prosperity. Chapter viii. 22 appears to continue at ch. x. 17. The intervening passages form another complete story, for in this account (probably the earlier and more accurate) God chooses SAUL in answer to the cry of His people for deliverance from Philistine domination, and Samuel utters no word of protest or warning (ix. 15-18). Pupils may be confused unless this duplication of stories is made clear to them, with the further possible explanation that the later account was didactic, written after subsequent history had shown the evils as well as the advantages of

kingship, and the earlier idyllic, pointing to the real significance of the kingly house as not a matter of "divine right of kings," but on the contrary a means by which God Himself ruled.

In ix. 9, "seer" suggests vision: "prophet" emphasises utterance as a result of insight. Note that in rather earlier days there were "bands" and "schools" of prophets who, like dervishes, sought inspiration by physical gyrations and the working up of emotional frenzy, and if Saul (who, as the story of his periods of "darkness" shows, was neurotic) lent himself to this ecstatic type of quasi-religious excitement, he would incur disparaging remarks (x. 11). "The high place" (ix. 13, 19, 25, x. 5, 10, etc.) is the sacred mound, with an altar, dedicated to the worship of Yahweh.

The DAVID stories included here need little elucidation. Saul's forfeiture of the kingship was no arbitrary matter. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. xv. 22). His recurrent gloom and neurotic frenzy (xviii. 10, R.V. marg., "he raved") were regarded as a visitation from God, who was believed to control all "spirits," good and evil (xvi. 14, xix. 9); psychologically this sense of separation from God and obsession by melancholy, fear and rage was the outcome of Saul's consciousness of guilt and of inner conflict which he could not fully understand or resolve. David's music helped Saul to a temporary sense of restored harmony (cf. Browning's *Saul*, despite its anachronisms), and David's secret was in the belief in God which found expression in his character as a youth and a young man (xviii. 14). His chivalry, exemplified in ch. xxvi, may be recalled along with the stories of his fearlessness and courage in ch. xvii. Daring, loyalty, and the spirit of poetry made him in these earlier years a singularly attractive figure.

The *teraphim* of xix. 13, 16 was probably an image

(cf. the story of Rachel in Gen. xxxi) which may have been connected with ancestor-worship, foreign deities, or even the primitive worship of Yahweh, but was suppressed during Josiah's Reformation (2 Kings xxiii. 24; cf. Deut. xviii. 10 *f.*).

David's supreme achievement was that he made the Hebrews a united nation and gave them a capital city which remained the centre of their life for a thousand years. Till now, though there had been various groupings among the tribes, there had never been a complete welding of them all together. The southerners, moreover, had been separated from the northerners by a wedge of non-Jewish folk who were always potential and often actual enemies. The unity was achieved not by force of arms but by common consent (2 Sam. v. 1-5), and was soon followed by the capture of the Jebusite stronghold and the transformation of it into Jerusalem, high up among the hills, remote from the great coast road, an almost impregnable fortress, well situated as a centre of government for north and south.

The key to David's success and the reason why he became the ideal Ruler of Israel in a Golden Age of the Hebrews is found in v. 12.

David once and for all made an end of the Philistine domination (v. 17-25), but again, as the poetically-phrased story of "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees" indicates (v. 23, 24), it was by waiting Yahweh's time and marching in His strength.

Chapter viii reads like an official record of David's conquests, and the appointment of a royal "scribe" (viii. 17) may indicate the keeping of such State documents. Refer to a commentary for "Baal-perazim" and for viii. 1, 13. It was to ZADOK (viii. 17) that the SADDUCEES professed to trace back the origin of their order. The "Cherethites and Pelethites" (viii. 18) were the king's bodyguard of foreign mercenaries—an

innovation—and were probably Philistine. Concerning viii. 2, cf. p. 131.

The Menace of Paganism.

SOLOMON came to the throne with a great tradition to maintain, a special task (the building of the Temple) to fulfil, and an ideal of his own to pursue (1 Kings iii. 9). Chapter iv pictures the extent of his realm ("the river" is the Euphrates: maps are important here) and the greatness of his wealth. The numbers, no doubt, are symbolical rather than actual. But by his rule he gained personal influence and high reputation (iv. 29-34: the "three thousand proverbs" are not the Book of Proverbs, compiled after the Exile, though this includes some of his). The introduction in iii. 1-3, however, indicates the weak spots in his character and policy.

"HIGH PLACES": it was natural that before the Temple was built, sacrifices to Yahweh should be offered at places up and down the country conducive to religious emotion. Many, however, had formerly been used for pagan worship, and pagan elements were introduced into the worship of Yahweh there. It is not said that Solomon practised or condoned any such degenerate types of worship at the high places which he himself frequented (iii. 3-4), but what the King did threw a cloak of respectability over less worthy practices by others, and abuses grew worse until, three hundred years later, Josiah attempted his reform (p. 112). Note the apologetic "only," iii. 3.

Solomon sought power and prosperity not by armed force but by treaties, cemented by marriages with foreign princesses. Polygamy as such was still not regarded as wrong, but Solomon's wives claimed the right to bring with them all that pertained to the worship of their own gods, and since (pp. 84, 94) it was believed that every nation derived its wealth and

power from its own god, the Hebrews were induced to incorporate the worship of the princesses' gods with the worship of Yabweh.

Chapter v shows how, for the BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE and other magnificent edifices, Solomon began the heavy taxation and the forced labour which in time led to discontent, and indeed to the disruption of David's kingdom.

Chapter ix. 1-16 amounts almost to a solemn RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT which, with the deliverance from Egypt, again recalled here, was the marrow of Hebrew religion. But with the promise is uttered a warning of what must inevitably follow unfaithfulness. The framework of later prophetic teaching is in these verses, which perhaps owe something to being edited in the seventh century, when the great prophets rebuked the Hebrews for precisely this failure.

Though Solomon had built the Temple and had become famed for practical wisdom, the wholly material riches described in x. 10-25 overshadowed all else towards the close of his life.

The possibility of revolt on the part of the Northern tribes had become evident to him, and a religious interpretation was given to it (1 Kings xi. 11). The story of JEROBOAM and Ahijah (xi. 26 *ff.*) shows that both sides foresaw a breakaway, and Jeroboam may have been impelled by a genuine sense of duty towards God in his first approach to Rehoboam. The Deuteronomic conception of God in history appears more probably in the summarising comment (xii. 15); xii. 7 brings out the Jewish conception of kingship.

The order of the selections in the *Syllabus* may at this point seem confusing till it is understood that the purpose is to follow out the hardening of THE POLITICAL DIVISION between Judah and Israel before considering THE SPIRITUAL SECESSION for which Jeroboam, "who

made Israel to sin," and his successors were responsible. From the revolt of Jeroboam until the fall of Samaria in 721, "Israel" means the Northern kingdom, sometimes called "Ephraim," to distinguish it from Judah, the Southern kingdom. Only earlier and later does "people of Israel" mean the whole Hebrew people. After the extinction of the Northern kingdom, "Jews" was a natural description of the Hebrews left in the South. OMRI was far more important than Ahab from the standpoint of secular history: he gave the Northern kingdom a capital, Samaria, as David had given the united kingdom one in Jerusalem, and did much to secure good order in his domain and friendly, prosperous relationships with surrounding ones. But all this is ignored by the writer of Kings, who merely fits Omri into the framework of good and bad kings (i.e. loyal to Yahweh or otherwise) on which he shapes his book (1 Kings xvi. 25, 26, 30, 31).

AHAB (politically not a bad ruler and leader) followed the foreign alliance policy of Solomon, and it is specially noted here (xvi. 31) because the advent of Jezebel, a missionary of the Tyrian Baal (see *Jezebel*, in "Biblical Biographies," Rich and Cowan, 5s.) intensified the idolatry which led to Elijah's tremendous protest and the real parting of the ways for Israel. Darker evils still are indicated in xvi. 34, where CHILD-SACRIFICE, especially at the foundation of a temple or other public building, is meant by "with the loss of." Excavators have discovered in Palestine earthenware jars containing the skeletons of infants buried alive beneath the door-posts or pillars of such buildings. The story of Abraham and Isaac may reflect the earliest awareness that this was wrong. (Gen. xxii; see p. 214; cf. Micah vi. 7.) The story of Jezebel (2 Kings ix. 21-37) shows the nemesis of all this. For Jezebel's "thou Zimri," see 1 Kings xvi. 8-20.

The reference to "the book of the chronicles of the Kings of Israel" (1 Kings xvi. 27) indicates another of the various sources (like the book of Jashar, quoted Joshua x. 12-13) used by the compiler of 1 and 2 Kings and now lost (it is not, of course, our "Chronicles"), and emphasises the standpoint of the writer of Kings. It is as though he said "secular historians tell us a great deal about the achievements of these kings, but the only thing that matters is that they caused the whole nation to forget the Deliverance and depart from the Covenant."

The *Syllabus* returns now to follow out the real cause of Israel's undoing—JEROBOAM'S IDOLATRY. Instead of seeing to it that religion determined politics, as Moses and David had done, Jeroboam put politics first (1 Kings xii. 26-7). For worship of "calves" see p. 84. The earlier Hebrews persuaded themselves that they were really worshipping Yahweh *under the form* of pagan idols or rites. Those of the Northern kingdom under Jeroboam and Ahab were guilty of outright idolatry, even adapting the forms of Yahweh worship to that of the bull and the Tyrian Baal.

Prophecy did not necessarily mean foretelling. The "man of God" in 1 Kings xiii. 1 may have done no more than proclaim the wickedness of what the king and his people were doing, and declare that because Yahweh was righteous there could be no escape from the consequences of such sin. The specific reference (xiii. 2) to Josiah, whose reformation was three centuries later (621 B.C.), is no doubt due to the seventh-century Deuteronomic editor. It is more likely that the event (2 Kings xxiii. 15-16) recalled the prophecy than that the prophet specifically foretold the event. The integrity and independence of the true prophet is brought out in 1 Kings xiii. 8-9, and xiii. 11-32 indicates (rather after the fashion of a cautionary tale)

the penalty for weakness or falsity. The whole of this strange tale illustrates the writer's conviction that even prophecy at its best was corrupted under Jeroboam, just as xiii. 33-4 shows how Jeroboam not only flouted the prophets but debased the priesthood. Similarly the familiar NABOTH story in xxi, while it says nothing about the introduction of pagan worship by Jezebel, makes clear the distinctive belief of the Hebrews that religion and morality are inseparable, for it is the pagan Jezebel who corrupts justice in order to gratify the king's desire, and to preserve his pride of power over against the freedom of the subject (cf. the denunciations of injustice, as fundamentally irreligious, in Amos and Micah).

ELIJAH is the first great hero-prophet of Israel, declaring the righteousness of God and His judgments, and not hesitating to put these judgments ruthlessly into effect, while yet sensitive to the "still small voice" of God in his own heart, bidding him look further and deeper than external situations and events for the truth about God.

Israel was plunging into polytheism, forgetting the Covenant and divorcing religion from morality. Elijah's stern challenge saved Israel, and he thus came next after Moses in the estimation of religious men (cf. the story of the Transfiguration, Mark ix. 4).

The memory of heroes is soon surrounded by later generations with legendary tales. (See *Syllabus*, p. 120, note on "History, Legend and Myth.") Most of the OLD TESTAMENT MIRACLE stories gather about Moses and Elijah: the tendency diminishes with Joshua and Elisha—2 Kings iv. looks like a repetition of 1 Kings xvii. It is difficult to say what is the element of truth in the miracles described in xvii. The Hebrew tendency to interpret coincidences as direct divine intervention cannot reasonably be brought in every time

a miracle is said to have occurred: special providence is an explanation in modern terms which many will think more satisfying. Not every reported miracle in either the Old Testament or the New is to be accepted, but the same principles of enquiry and interpretation must be applied in *both*, even though the influence of legend may be more marked in Kings than in Acts. (Cf. pp. 21, 82 and *Syllabus*, p. 125, note on "Miracles in the Gospels.") In any case the stress in teaching the story of Elijah must be upon his character, message, and mission, not upon the miracles, which are best handled as tales that grew up about him because of the real power that he exerted upon king, queen, priests, and people: details can neither be dogmatically affirmed nor dogmatically denied. But Elijah himself stands out as stark and undeniable as Savonarola or Cromwell.

The Shadows of Exile.

THE HEBREW OLD TESTAMENT is divided into three sections—the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The books of Samuel and Kings are "the Former Prophets": they are history written and edited from the standpoint of the great prophets who dominate the scene during the four centuries between Elijah and "The Unknown Prophet of the Exile" ("Second Isaiah"). The "Latter Prophets" include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and "the Book of the Twelve Prophets," i.e. those commonly known as "Minor Prophets." The books which bear the names of prophets are collections of "oracles" written down by the prophets themselves or by others at their dictation: this is why the prophets from Amos onwards are called "THE WRITING PROPHETS." Their utterances were brief and often poetic in form: a good translation (e.g. Smith and Goodspeed) shows a large part of these books as

poetry. With the actual utterances thus preserved later editors, even of short books like Amos and Hosea, have put others of a similar character spoken and written by other prophets whose names we do not now know.

The important thing, however, is to get a genuine picture of the prophet in his setting by studying the biographical passages in the book (cf. Amos vii. 14) and relevant passages in Kings: then we can grasp what his message meant to himself and to those who heard or read it. George Adam Smith's *Isaiah* (2 vols.) and *The Book of the Twelve Prophets* (2 vols.), are invaluable. See *Syllabus Bibliography*. Cook's *The Prophets of the Bible* (S.C.M. Press, 5s.) is a simple and reliable book. See also "Clarendon Bible," O.T., vols. 3 and 4. The translations into colloquial English published by the National Adult School Union at prices varying from 6d. to 1s. 3d. each are by well-known scholars, and help greatly in class teaching.

AMOS is earliest (about 750 B.C.). A rugged, austere herdsman and mulberry-fig grower on the hills of the South country, he marketed his produce at Bethel, the flourishing centre of religious and social life in the kingdom of Israel. There he encountered idolatry, injustice, luxury and the immorality due partly to religious fervour without moral discipline, and partly to the actual nature of an emotional and sometimes licentious worship. Yahweh was indeed worshipped, but according to pagan rites and alongside other gods. Amos denounced these evils, and declared that punishment must follow, not only because Jahweh required righteousness as well as devotion, but also because such laxity weakened the morale of a nation which, though now prosperous and at peace with her neighbours, would be an easy prey to attacks.

HOSEA was a Northerner whose chief work was done during the decade of degeneration and confusion

following the death of Jeroboam II in 747 B.C. An educated man, of a meditative, poetic type, he was no less insistent than Amos upon moral austerity, for "the Holy One is in the midst of thee" (xi. 9). Scholars can only guess at the meaning of many of his phrases (for which see Commentaries) because the text is so corrupt, but his message is clear enough (translation by Povah, N.A.S.U., 9d.). It begins with the most striking "acted parable" in the Old Testament—his marriage to the unfaithful Gomer and his enduring love, which in the end paid the price of ransoming and restoring her.

In iv. the prevalent injustice and immorality are put down to ignorance and laxity in religion, for which priest and prophet are accountable. In famine and destruction may be seen the judgment of God. xi again recalls the deliverance from Egypt and the special relationship of the people to God (xi. has, of course, no connection whatever with the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt: Matt. ii. 15 merely reads that story back into this familiar passage). The pagan worship in the Northern kingdom was the "adultery" typified in Hosea's personal experience by Gomer, and the prophet's own deep love awakens him to the truth that God is love as well as righteousness. Verses 8-9 clearly reveal Hosea's conception of God.

Chapter xiv pictures the attitude of the people when the working out of God's discipline is over, and they have at last returned wholeheartedly to Him, worshipping sincerely, without idolatry, and no longer seeking safety in foreign alliances (xiv. 3: Asshur is Assyria; Egypt might supply cavalry). xiv. 7 may be rendered, "Again will they dwell under his shadow." Like all the prophets, Hosea takes the Deuteronomic view of history (xiv. 9; see p. 91).

TO ISAIAH OF JERUSALEM are attributed the first thirty-nine chapters of the book which bears his name,

though these also contain interpolations from other sources. He prophesied between 744 B.C. and 701; according to tradition he met his death (perhaps 680 B.C.) by being sawn asunder (cf. Heb. xi. 37) as a penalty for his denunciation of national apostasy and his prediction of consequent disaster. Apparently of high birth (possibly a cousin of King Uzziah) and of influence at the court in Jerusalem, he was a man of reverent, sensitive spirit and he preached the holy majesty of God as Amos had proclaimed God's righteousness and Hosea His love. In vi, all the great notes of Isaiah's preaching emerge, including the belief that Judah would be overthrown, as Israel had been in 721 B.C., but Jerusalem would survive, because the Temple, the earthly centre of the Divine presence, was there, and A FAITHFUL "REMNER" (Isa. xxxvii. 31, 32) of the Hebrew people would be brought back by God from captivity to re-establish the true worship in their own land (vi. 11-13: cf. xxxv. 10). "Shear-Jashub" means a "remnant will return": the names which Isaiah gave to his children (as Hosea to his) are "parables": Isaiah's own name means "God is my salvation." Peake (*Commentary*, p. 441) explains the difficult passage vi. 9-10 thus: "Yahweh bids him go, but warns him of the result. Since the prophet's message hardens those whom it does not persuade, he is here said to do what in most cases his preaching will bring about. The word tests men and forces them to take up a position on one side or the other."

Isaiah lived under at least four kings, Uzziah (i.e. Azariah), Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, but his ministry began with the accession of Jotham in 744 B.C. (vi. 1). Though concerned with the moral and religious decline of Judah, the Southern kingdom, his preaching had to do largely with the political situation, which, like the moral, he saw to be inseparable from the

religious. Immorality, idolatry, and dependence for national security upon foreign alliances instead of upon God are the three evils against which he bore perpetual witness, sustained by his own faith and worship, as vi indicates.

First, we must see clearly the man himself and the historical, geographical, and political facts which stimulated him to action; otherwise pupils may get lost among the "Kings of Israel and Judah." Like all the prophets, Isaiah preached definitely to his times and always about God. Only as boys and girls understand this will they see the real bearing of Old Testament truth upon the problems of later generations, including our own (cf. Spens Report, ch. on "Scripture," p. 209. George A. Birmingham's *Isaiah*, in "Biblical Biographies," is sound and vivid).

ASSYRIA, the most ruthlessly and cruelly militaristic power in the ancient world, was now becoming dominant and Egypt, her rival for world ascendancy, had grown weak. Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel wanted the support of Judah for a defensive confederation of small Palestinian states, but their attempt to force this by attacking Judah and setting up there a puppet king (Isa. vii. 6) were successfully resisted (vii. 1). Nevertheless Ahaz ("the house of David") was terrified, and meditated the desperate expedient of alliance with Assyria as a means of protection against Rezin and Pekah, whom Isaiah scorned (vii. 4-9).

The "sign" given in vii. 14-16 comes into the *Syllabus* later (p. 62, A(i)), and will be better understood then if its setting is grasped now. It means simply that between the conception of a child and its transition from infancy to childhood (i.e. within two or three years) Isaiah's forecast about Syria and Ephraim will be fulfilled. The writer of Matthew quotes this as

"prophecy" (Matt. 1, 22-3), as he does "out of Egypt did I call my son," but the connection between text and event is purely verbal (see note on Matthew's use of "proof-texts," p. 157). In this case *'almah*, the Hebrew word, means either a marriageable or a young married woman, but the word was translated *parthenos* (virgin in the modern sense) in the Septuagint: the point of the "illustration" or "sign" lies wholly in the brevity of the period indicated and not in any peculiarity of either mother or child.

As to the name "Immanuel," Peake says: "Any young woman who shortly gives birth to a son may call him Immanuel, and by this expression of faith that God is with His people will rebuke the king's unbelief" (*Commentary*, p. 442).

2 Kings xvi-xx gives us the historical background of Isaiah's life and work. The sources were Court chronicles (xv. 31, xvi. 19). The tables of Assyrian kings discovered in Mesopotamia confirm and amplify these.

Uzziah and Jotham had been good kings of Judah from the Deuteronomic point of view (i.e. that of sound religion: cf. xv. 34-5) but they had left the "high places" undestroyed. Ahaz, weak and compromising, practised pagan forms of worship and even sacrificed his son—perhaps in the hope of securing divine aid against his enemies (xvi. 2, 4). Finally, though the attack on Judah by Rezin and Pekah failed, Rezin made Edom (xvi. 6) a dependency of Syria. Thereupon Ahaz sought alliance with Assyria, which exacted heavy tribute, but he secured the overthrow of Syria (xvi. 9), and set up an altar in Jerusalem patterned upon an Assyrian model (xvi. 10-18).

Meantime Israel had gone from bad to worse. The Assyrian Tiglath-Pileser had destroyed Damascus in 734, thus completely subduing Syria. Hoshea of Israel was a creature of the Assyrians, but a less bad king

(again from the Deuteronomic point of view in morals and religion) than Pekah and Menahem, his predecessors. Shalmaneser of Assyria threatened him but was bought off with tribute. Hoshea, however, appealed to the Egyptians as Ahaz had done to the Assyrians, ceasing to pay tribute to Shalmaneser (xvii. 4). Assyrian vengeance followed, culminating in the FALL OF SAMARIA in 721 and the deportation of a large part of its population, which never returned (xvii. 5-6). Henceforth "Israel" (the "ten tribes") had no existence in history. Sargon, now King of Assyria, populated the Northern kingdom with colonists of several nationalities (xvii. 24) who intermarried with the surviving Hebrews, and thus arose THE SAMARITANS against whom later, on account of their mixed blood and differences in religious belief and observance, the Jews developed an antipathy which was active in the time of Jesus (John iv. 9). The account in xvii is a little confusing, because interspersed with it we have a "Deuteronomic sermon" on the disastrous sins of Israel (xvii. 7-23), with a brief interjection on the sins of Judah also (xvii. 19). The latter part of the chapter (xvii. 34-41) is not, of course, a description of the religion of the Samaritans as it came to be in the time when their offer of help was rejected by Zerubbabel (Ezra iv. 1-3), but in part recounts the sins that led to the fall of Samaria and in part refers to the worship of Yahweh as "god of the land," alongside their various national gods, which followed the settlement (xvii. 24-41).

HEZEKIAH, doubtless influenced by Isaiah's preaching, began reforms which Josiah carried out more drastically and fully. "Nehushtan" (xviii. 4)—"a mere bit of brass"—recalls the contemptuous irony concerning idols in Isa. xliv. 9-20. But when Sennacherib, who succeeded Sargon in 705, invaded the neighbouring

kingdoms to the North, and then made his victorious way down the coast to Judah, Hezekiah's faith was sorely tried. Sennacherib, according to his own account, took 140 towns in the west of Hezekiah's domain and devastated the countryside, his armies consuming the produce of the farms as they went (see Caiger, *Bible and Spade*, p. 156). Hezekiah sought to stay Sennacherib's advance by voluntary tribute (xviii. 14-16) and wished to seek help from Egypt, but Isaiah opposed any such policy: the fatal experience of Israel had proved its futility, but above all, Jerusalem was invulnerable because in the Temple the presence of Yahweh dwelt (cf. Isa. xxxvi-xxxvii). Sennacherib's emissaries also poured scorn on the value to Hezekiah of foreign alliances, but for other reasons: Sennacherib's armies had overwhelmed the neighbouring peoples, whose gods were thus proved inferior to those of the Assyrians and unable to save them: the fate of Israel, said the Rab-Shakeh, proved that the God of the Hebrews was no more potent, and as for the Egyptians, Sennacherib had already once defeated them and the Philistines. The Hebrews themselves not only lacked cavalry but even men to ride if horses were given them. The Assyrian argument is summarised more clearly in 2 Chron. xxxii (an account compiled from the priestly point of view during the Exile, a century and a half later), where also Hezekiah's character and achievements are celebrated.

2 Kings xviii. 17-xix. 37 contains two more detailed narratives of the Assyrian campaign already summarised in xviii. 13-15. They seem confused and difficult only when read as one consecutive story. xix. 6 is Isaiah's straightforward assurance to Hezekiah that Yahweh is able to deal with the Assyrians: "I will put a spirit in him" means that his mind would become influenced by an uneasiness which a rumour of danger

to his own country from another quarter (Babylon) would intensify. xix. 20-8, written in a special metre, is Isaiah's "taunt-song" against Sennacherib, followed by an assurance to Hezekiah in the form of a "sign"—within three years the people would be planting their own crops again (cf. the "sign" of Isa. vii. 14-16). He reaffirms his faith regarding the holy city (xix. 34).

The disaster to Sennacherib's forces (xix. 35-6) is generally understood to mean pestilence, possibly bubonic plague, carried by mice and likely to spread rapidly among troops lacking, by now, proper food (since they had consumed the green crops) and without sufficient water (cf. 2 Chron. xxxii. 2-4). Herodotus (ii. 141) says that mice nibbled the bow strings of the Assyrians, and that the army was destroyed by a pestilence. The "angel of God" simply means that God used this agency to fulfil His purpose. Quite possibly Sennacherib simply turned back hastily to deal with the far more pressing situation caused by the threat to Nineveh, though illness among his troops may have precipitated his decision (cf. p. 103). Twenty years later Sennacherib was murdered by his sons (xix. 37).

JOSIAH came to the throne of Judah in 637 B.C., after a long period of reaction to idolatry and paganised worship under Manasseh and Amon (2 Kings xxi). He was the Edward VI of Judah. He reformed religion more thoroughly than Hezekiah, ordering the destruction of Bethel (the Northern rival to Jerusalem as a centre of worship) and the "high places," and confining sacrifice to the Temple so that sacrifices to pagan deities, or to Yahweh under paganised forms, up and down the country should be effectually stopped.

The great event of Josiah's reign, however, was the DISCOVERY OF "THE BOOK OF THE LAW." The Chronicler, three centuries later, says this was the Mosaic Law (2 Chron. xxxiv. 14). Manasseh's persecution

may have included destruction of sacred writings, as Diocletian ordered all copies of the Bible to be destroyed in A.D. 303, and the English Bishops burned those of the English translation in 1526. The book found by Shaphan may therefore have been a copy of JE (see below) hidden away in the Temple for preservation and forgotten. But most scholars think it was identical with the greater part—including the legislative kernel, chaps. vi–xxvi—of Deuteronomy. This embodied in laws the religious teaching of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah, and was probably the secret work of victims of Manasseh's persecution. While it denounces the apostasy which horrified Josiah and roused the prophetess Huldah (2 Kings xxii. 11, 16–17), it presents a conception of the love of God unequalled in the Pentateuch (Jcsus quotes more from Deuteronomy than from any other O.T. book). This is paralleled, e.g. in Hos. xi and Isa. xii. At the same time Josiah's reformation accorded with the demands of Deuteronomy. Further, the versions of the Hexateuch (Genesis–Joshua) and of the “Former Prophets” (Samuel and Kings) already in existence in 621 were then or later edited by scribes and priests from the Deuteronomic point of view (see p. 129).

Thus by the end of the seventh century or the beginning of the sixth the books which became our Pentateuch contained three strata, the Jahwistic (J, *circa* 850, about the time of Elijah), and Elohist (E, *circa* 750, about the time of Isaiah), known also as the Judaic and Ephraimite (brought together in JE, *circa* 700–675), and the Deuteronomic (D, 621, about the time of Jeremiah). The Priestly Code (P) probably took shape about 500, formed part of the Priestly Narrative taken by Ezra in 397 to Jerusalem (p. 129), and later was made the framework of the Pentateuch. (See *A Companion to the Bible*, pp. 35 ff.)

HULDAH's prophecy was fulfilled in so far as Josiah, drawn into international rivalries, was killed at MEGIDDO, about 608 B.C., by Pharaoh Necho, who was advancing against Assyria. This "sealed the fate of Judah."

Mesha, King of Moab, boasting that he has caused Israel to "perish everlastingly" after a period of conflict during the reigns of Omri, Ahab and Jehoram, says (MOABITE STONE, ninth century B.C., discovered in 1868, preserved in the Louvre, replica in British Museum, trans. and photograph, Gaiger, pp. 135-8): "I took from them the vessels of Jahweh and dragged them before Chemosh"—one of the earliest references to Yahweh, if not the first, outside the Bible.

Catastrophe.

JEREMIAH was not the weeping pessimist suggested by our English word "jeremiad," or by the false attribution of "Lamentations" to his authorship. He is one of the heroic figures of the Old Testament. Many scholars think that his life and sacrificial sufferings were in the mind of the writer of Isa. liii. George A. Birmingham's *God's Iron* (Skeffington, 7s. 6d.) is a fine account of Jeremiah in story form and has excellent chapters on the prophetic period as a whole. Skinner's great exposition, *Prophecy and Religion* (C.U.P., 7s. 6d.) shows that "Jeremiah's specific greatness lies in the sphere of personal religion."

Born at Anathoth of a priestly family, but not himself a priest, he was called to prophesy some five years before Josiah's reformation began, and had in him the spirit of Hosea and Deuteronomy. He differed from Isaiah in believing that not even the Temple could save Jerusalem. Exile was to be the judgment of God upon His apostate people, but, like Isaiah, Jeremiah believed that a faithful remnant would be restored.

He proclaimed that the Law and the Covenant should no longer be merely written in books but should be in the hearts of the people (Jer. xxxi. 31-4), and he is among the first of the prophets to teach individual responsibility (xxxi. 29, 30): hitherto it had been held that a man was related to God first of all as a member of the chosen people; Jeremiah places the personal before the corporate, though he insists that the grace of God is given to a man not simply for his own sake and salvation, but that he may serve the community. Repentance and the forgiving grace of God are his great themes.

Jeremiah is very rich in poetic figures drawn from Nature and the life of the countryside (cf. Theodore Robinson, "Clarendon Bible," O.T., III, p. 194*f.*), and xxiv is an example of this. The first deportation by the Babylonian ("Chaldean") King Nebuchadrezzar has already taken place (597 B.C.), but at least some of the picked men thus carried off shall return: the majority of the people, however, being unrepentantly apostate, must suffer final exile and dispersion (xxiv. 5-10). Pharaoh Necho had set up Josiah's son Eliakim, whom he named JEHOIAKIM, in place of Josiah's other son, Jehoahaz, as King of Judah, and had carried Jehoahaz captive to Egypt (2 Kings xxiii. 34). There was a colony of Jews in Egypt before 525: they had a Temple at Elephantine, on the Nile, and papyri have been discovered which give us a great deal of information about their way of worship (Jer. xxiv. 8. See Wheeler Robinson, *History of Israel*, pp. 160-2). Jeremiah himself was later carried captive to Egypt by the Jews who escaped the second deportation to Babylon (586), and he died there.

BABYLON had now taken the place of Assyria as the dominant power in the world of that time. NINEVEH FELL in 612 B.C. At the battle of CARCHEMISH in 605

(one of the "decisive battles of the world") Nebuchadrezzar had finally defeated Egypt under Pharaoh Necho (cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 7). Jehoiakim's was a bad reign: he remained tributary to Egypt (2 Kings xxiii. 35) but also departed wholly from the reformation carried out by his father Josiah, and reverted to the practices of Manasseh (2 Kings xxiii. 37). Nebuchadrezzar attacked him and he submitted but then, revolting, brought upon Judah a further invasion from Babylon. His son JEHOIACHIN made no change and within three months was besieged in Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar, who in 597 overthrew the city and carried Jehoiachin captive to Babylon with the pick of the people and a large part of the Temple and palace treasures (xxiv. 8-16).

ZEDEKIAH (a brother of Jehoiakim) was made King of Judah by Nebuchadrezzar, but he also proved unfaithful both to God and to his Babylonian overlord. The result was the FALL OF JERUSALEM before Nebuchadrezzar in 586. Zedekiah was blinded and carried with all but "the poorest of the land," left to be "vine-dressers and husbandmen," to Babylon; the city walls were thrown down and the Temple destroyed by fire. GEDALIAH was made governor of Judah by the Babylonians, but was murdered by malcontents, who then in fear of Babylonian reprisals fled to Egypt, taking Jeremiah with them (2 Kings xxv. 26). Thus, it would seem, the repeated unfaithfulness of kings and people to God had, as the prophets foretold, resulted in the complete destruction of the Hebrew people and their worship.

The period of EXILE (586-538), however, proved to be a second creative experience in the religious life of the Jews. Bereft of their land, their sacred city, their Temple and its sacrifices, they discovered in a new simplicity of worship in SYNAGOGUES, with a service

consisting of the reading of the Scriptures, preaching, prayers, and psalms, that they could still know the presence of God. The prophets of the Exile, especially "THE UNKNOWN PROPHET," who wrote Isa. xl to lv (lvi-lxvi were written after the Return), the author of the "Servant Songs" (Isa. xlii. 1-4, xlix. 1-6, l. 4-9, lii. 13-liii. 12), and EZEKIEL, taught them the redemptive power of suffering, and the priests wrought out a new and more splendid design for the Temple and a still more elaborate code of worship and conduct (cf. the latter part of Ezekiel and Leviticus).

Jer. xxxvii takes us back to Zedekiah and the Babylonian invasion, but from Jeremiah's standpoint: xxxvii. 7-10 is his warning that Egypt is a useless ally and that there is no hope of escaping successful attack by Babylon: to believe now that Nebuchadrezzar will retreat at the last moment as Sennacherib had done is mere self-deception (xxxvii. 9). A temporary falling back of the Babylonians before the Egyptians was no ground for confidence (xxxvii. 11, 17). The imprisonment of Jeremiah for treachery had no effect upon his predictions: indeed Jeremiah goes further in his apparent lack of patriotism, and counsels surrender to the Babylonians, that life may be saved (xxxviii. 2-3). The intervention of Ebed-melech, the Ethiopian (xxxviii. 7-12), is a bit of genuine chivalry on the part of an African, and is well worth emphasising in teaching. The remainder of the *Syllabus* selection, to xxxviii. 28, brings out the steadfast courage of Jeremiah, and his political and spiritual insight, in contrast with the stubborn folly of the weakling king Zedekiah. The prophet would preserve the lives of the people even in submission to God's judgment of exile, because he believed that God would reveal Himself yet more fully in this discipline and would bring back those who responded to it so that in the end they might accomplish

His work. The king saw in defeat nothing but the eclipse of the nation, and refused to listen.

Then comes the second deportation, the safeguard given to Jeremiah by Nebuchadrezzar, and Jeremiah's assurance of safety to Ebed-melech (xxxix). Jer. xl-xliii depicts in greater detail than Kings the intrigues that developed in Jerusalem among the people left there after the second deportation and Jeremiah's continued insistence that, if the people would but trust God, there should indeed be "a new beginning"—cf. the picture in Jer. xxxi, and the subordination of it all to the thought "I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn" (verse 9).

EZEKIEL shares with "The Unknown Prophet" (Isa. xl to lv) the great achievement of interpreting to the Jews in Exile the meaning of their sufferings not only for themselves but for all people, and recreating in them the deep desire to worship God aright which found expression in magnificence of ritual but also in those PSALMS composed at that time. He was a young priest who may have shared in the Temple ministry before he was carried captive to Babylon in 597, settling there as a married man in his own house by the river Chebar (iii. 15, viii. 1, xxiv. 18). The book of Ezekiel is concerned in the first half (i-xxiv) with the situation before the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and in the second (xxv-xlviii, which may be by another writer) with the restoration of Jerusalem and the Jewish community. Ezekiel used strange imagery, performing also even more symbolic actions than Isaiah or Jeremiah (iv. 1 ff., v. 1-4, xii. 1-20, xxxvii. 15 ff.). He was no doubt influenced by the colossal carvings of which Babylon was full, and his fellow-captives would understand his references to the "wheels" and so forth. But he seems to have had a temperament somewhat like that of William Blake.

The essentials regarding his call and his message can without difficulty be disentangled and can be summarised (blackboard) for boys and girls. A clear outline of the book is given by Wheeler Robinson (*The Old Testament, its Making and Meaning*, pp. 218-19) and a good exposition by Emery Barnes (*Gore's Commentary*, pp. 520-5). The supreme note is struck in xxxvi. 26 *f*. Ezekiel reiterates Jeremiah's teaching about personal responsibility for sin and its outcome (xviii. 1-18), while he emphasises corporate worship as vital to the renewed relationship, according to the Covenant between the people and their God (xxxvii. 26-8). In xliv a clear distinction is made between Priest and Levite (cf. p. 87), and their respective functions are once and for all determined.

Chapter iv. 1-13 sets forth symbolically the approaching sufferings of the people under siege, and v. 5-8 the reason why they will be unable to resist attack and will be driven into exile: xv tells of the completeness with which the degenerate national life (which might have been so fruitful) will be destroyed (there is nothing else to do with a dead vine), but xvi. 59-63 declares once more the everlasting mercy and faithfulness of God. In xx. 1-44 we have a magnificent summary of the whole history of the chosen people, seen in the light of God's purpose and grace, which, hindered but not frustrated by the folly and sin of one generation after another, must culminate in the conversion of the people through conviction of sin and recognition of the fact that God is always true to Himself, and that therefore in Him is their hope (xx. 44). It may almost be said that the meaning of the Old Testament ("covenant") is summed up in this chapter, and a link with the New is manifest when we compare Ezekiel's utterance with Stephen's at his martyrdom (Acts vii).

SECOND YEAR: 12+

THE UNIVERSAL GOSPEL

Before the Exile the Jews had sought to defend against aggressors the land which their ancestors had conquered, while the task of their Prophets had been to preserve the purity of Hebrew religion and morality and to lead the people into deeper knowledge of God. Experience during the Exile, the teaching of the exilic Prophets about the return, and the development of a permanent "dispersion" of Jews still loyal to their religion but settled in far-off lands, brought about a new vision of God's purpose for His chosen people. In future they were to be "a light to the Gentiles" (Isa. xlix. 6, xlii. 6). THE NEW JUDAISM, centred once more in Zion, was to be missionary, making known to all men a God whose power, righteousness, loving-kindness and way of salvation through suffering the Jews had experienced. The concept of THE MESSIAH who should bring in the Kingdom was growing, though still limited and primitive. All this, as later became apparent, was a preparation for Jesus Christ and the good tidings of great joy to all people (Luke ii. 10). But during the intervening five centuries the Jews had much to learn, by further suffering as well as by brief religious-political triumph and independence.

I. FROM THE EXILE TO HEROD

This section of the *Syllabus*, though perhaps less familiar than the rest, is no more difficult. It is important, not only because we should never think of dropping the events of five hundred years out of the history of any other nation, but because some of the religious

ideas most frequent in the Gospels were born during this period. Several of the books in our Old Testament belong to these centuries—e.g. Second and Third Isaiah, with Haggai, Zechariah, Obadiah, Malachi, and Joel; Jonah; Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes; Nehemiah-Ezra (with Chronicles); and many Psalms. So also do the Old Testament Apocrypha, which were included in the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint, second century B.C., see p. 134).

The four books mentioned in the *Syllabus*, p. 60, are clear and simple accounts of the history, literature and religious development, all of which it is necessary to grasp in outline. For fuller information see Lofthouse, *Israel after the Exile*, and Box, *Judaism in the Greek Period* ("Clarendon Bible," O.T. Series, Vols. IV and V). An excellent summary of the whole period is given by Theodore Robinson in *A Companion to the Bible*, pp. 254-67. Parts at least of the Apocrypha should be read (cf. Evans, *The Apocrypha, Their Origin and Contents*, S.P.C.K., 1s.). Josephus, *Antiquities* (Whiston's trans.) can be picked up cheaply second-hand or borrowed from libraries; the "Everyman" Josephus contains only *The Jewish Wars*. Ayre, *The Forgotten Centuries* (S.C.M. Press, 2s. 6d.), is specially designed to help teachers in working out lessons on this period.

The *Syllabus* states the aim of the section concisely and this should be studied.

A. Jews and Persians.

From the time of Abraham to the Exile Asia had been dominated first by the Babylonian Empire which arose under Hammurabi, then by the Assyrian, and again by the Second Babylonian Empire founded by Nabopolassar in 625. Nineveh fell in 612 and Egypt, the perpetual rival of Babylon and Assyria, was defeated at Carchemish in 605. Under Nebuchadrezzar (604-

561) BABYLON attained the height of its power and prosperity. The Jews exiled there enjoyed considerable freedom. Their religion was purified, deepened, and simplified by the conditions of Exile. "For the birthplace of what we mean by Judaism we must look to Babylon" (Lofthouse, p. 14). The hope of return to Jerusalem was fostered by Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Unknown Prophet. When, therefore, under Nabonidus Babylon showed signs of internal divisions, while the rise of THE PERSIAN EMPIRE threatened it from without, the exiles were ready to hail Cyrus as God's agent for their deliverance.

The Medes had achieved considerable power to the North and West of Babylonia and Persia, being helped by the ravages of the barbarian Scythians who raided the country between their Caucasian home in the North and the borderland of Egypt, threatening Jerusalem in about 626 (cf. Zephaniah). At first the Persians were allies of the Medes (like themselves an Aryan people) against Babylon and the nations further West. CYRUS, King of Anshan, a province in Persia, made himself master of both Media and Persia, overthrew Crœsus of Lydia, and finally in 538 captured Babylon, where Belshazzar had succeeded Nabonidus. He thus created an empire more far-reaching than any of its predecessors in the ancient world, and established a supremacy of Aryans over Semites which was unchanged until the rise of Mohammed and the Arabs. His successors even threatened Greece. As Nahum in about 612 had exulted over the fall of Nineveh so the Unknown Prophet triumphs over THE FALL OF BABYLON and its gods (cf. Isa. xlvi. 1-7, xlvii. 1-7). Isa. xiii. 2-22 and xiv. 3-23 were written by a contemporary of the Unknown Prophet in anticipation of the fall of Babylon, as Jer. l, li had been a great deal earlier.

THE PERSIANS were liberal in their attitude to

conquered peoples: their civilisation and culture were on a high level: their religion (Zoroastrianism) was free of idolatry and ethical in character. Cyrus encouraged the worship by each nation of its own god—Bel and Marduk in the case of the Babylonians no less than Yahweh in that of the Jews (see Caiger, translation of the "Cylinder of Cyrus," *Bible and Spade*, pp. 180 f.).

THE JEWS RETURNED TO JERUSALEM and a small tract of country surrounding it at a radius of between ten and fifteen miles. The Edomites possessed the land to the South of this (including Hebron), and to the east of the Edomites were the Nabatean Arabs (Mal. i. 3). The Philistine cities to the South-west still flourished. The Phœnicians maintained their position to the North. "GALILEE OF THE GENTILES" was practically heathen, and only a generation or two before the time of Christ did it once more become mainly Jewish. Between Galilee and Jerusalem were the Samaritans, of mixed blood (p. 110). (For all this see Edwyn Bevan, *Jerusalem Under the High Priests*, Arnold 8s. 6d., ch. 1.) The Jews therefore returned to a situation much the same as before the Exile, except that the old Southern kingdom of Judah, from which they had been carried captive, had now shrunk to Jerusalem and its environs. We must keep this background in mind when trying to picture what the return from the security and splendour of Babylon meant.

Isa. xl is THE UNKNOWN PROPHET'S INTRODUCTION to his book. The belief that God is at work in *all* history, in world affairs as well as in those of the Jewish people, is now established. (R.V. marg. renderings are particularly illuminating.) Of the two voices, xl. 3 and 6, the first triumphantly pictures the homeward journey and the revealed presence ("glory") of God, while the second replies to the pessimists. The gods of Babylon and the East were pre-eminently gods of power, but

the God of Israel is both Creator-Lord and Shepherd (xl. 11, cf. Ezek. xxxiv. 11 *ff.*; Ps. xxiii), a note of tenderness distinctive of Jewish religion. Note the majesty, irony (cf. xlv. 9-20) and sympathy of xl. 9-31. Having dwelt thus on the universal power and grace of God the Prophet can, without fear of misunderstanding, call the Zoroastrian CYRUS "God's anointed," or "Messiah" (xlv. 1), and declare that Cyrus is unconsciously serving the one true God (xlv. 3, 5-7). The complete poem, or oracle, is from xlv. 24 to xlv. 8. Cyrus, in the inscriptions giving his own account of his victory, uses phrases from xlv. 1-13.

Chapter lii. 7-9 portrays messengers hastening to herald the approach of the exiles with Yahweh at their head, the answer of the watchmen on the ruined walls, the shout of joy from the inhabitants, and the face to face ("eye to eye") meeting. Verses 11 and 12 are as from Babylon, where Cyrus has now set the exiles free to return, taking with them the Temple-vessels (cf. Jer. xxviii. 6; Ezra i. 9 *ff.*), and verse 12 contrasts their departure with the flight from Egypt.

xlii. 1-4 is the first of the SERVANT SONGS (see p. 117) describing his commission. The task of the Servant (whether nation, "remnant," or representative person) is not vehement denunciation, nor is it confined to Israel; it is, rather, the quiet, persistent proclamation of God's justice, righteousness and mercy. "He has a *law*, or '*torah*' of his own which is to bring peace and good government to the farthest nations. . . . *Law*, to the Hebrew, always suggests the teacher as much as the legislator; it means instruction, either in ritual or judicial decisions, or in matters of practical conduct or religion" (Lofthouse, p. 106). It is important to remember this when tracing the way in which, after the Exile, the priest replaced both prophet and king, while by the time of Christ Scribe and Pharisee had become,

as teachers of religion, the rivals of the priestly Sadducee, concerned with ritual and with politics (cf. pp. 146 ff.).

Isa. lii. 13, liii. 12 describes both the method and the climax of the Suffering Servant's mission. In contrast with the pre-exilic dreams of political pre-eminence among the nations, it is now proclaimed that in the purpose of God mankind is to be served supremely by VICARIOUS SUFFERING. (N.B. Pupils must clearly understand the difference between this and substitutionary punishment—an idea which does not occur in the prophets at all.) The structure of the poem is important for a true understanding of its meaning and is explained in the commentaries. (Lofthouse's notes are clear and succinct: George Adam Smith, *The Book of Isaiah*, II, ch. xx, should if possible be read.) In Isa. i. 4-6, the Servant's sufferings "seemed to have fallen upon him as the consequences of his fidelity to the Word committed to him; the Prophet had inevitably become the Martyr." Now "the Sufferer is explained and vindicated, first by God in the first strophe, lii. 13-15, and then by the Conscience of Men, his own people, in the second and third, liii. 1-3, 3-6; and then, as it appears, the Divine Voice, or the Prophet speaking for it, resumes in strophes iv and v, liii. 7-9, 10-12, and concludes in a strain similar to strophe i" (G. A. Smith, *Isaiah*, II, pp. 346 f.). Voluntary endurance of the sorrow, shame and pain resulting from the wrongdoing of those whom the sufferer loves and with whom he has identified himself can produce in them a sense of guilt, a real penitence, and a change of heart and will, when punishment alone induces them neither to recognise their sin nor to repent, and may indeed result only in a hardened and resentful attitude. There is no justice in punishing the innocent for the guilty, but no problem of justice arises when the innocent

voluntarily shares that inevitable outcome of the other's sin which is part of a moral order established and maintained by a God who is righteousness as well as love. Without such a moral order the universe would be as inconsistent and undependable as without the physical order manifest in Nature and represented by the "laws" of Science. Since men's folly and self-will are perpetually leading to infringements of both the moral and the physical order, with the necessary consequences of guilt and suffering, only a love which bears the suffering and changes the folly and self-will into right relations with God can make forgiveness effective, solve "the problem of suffering," and bring men back to that service of God which is perfect freedom.

Prophetic teaching touches its deepest and highest points here. A century and a half later (*circa* 400) the book of JOB dramatises the problem but, despite the magnificence of the writer's faith in God, comes less near than the "Servant Songs" to the truth finally made known in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Still later (*circa* 200) the book of ECCLESIASTES shows what mere worldly wisdom, the cynical pessimism of secular philosophies, makes of it. The true connection between Isa. lvi. 13-lvii and the Cross of Christ is shown in *The Cross of the Servant* (Wheeler Robinson, S.C.M. Press, 2s.), a most valuable study of the Servant Songs.

Originally CHRONICLES, EZRA, NEHEMIAH were connected writings intended to tell again from the post-exilic, priestly point of view "the history of Judah from the beginning of the world down to the establishment of Judaism through Ezra and Nehemiah" (Wheeler Robinson, *The Old Testament*, pp. 64 ff.). There was some displacement of documents (e.g. Neh. viii-x appears to be part of the "Memoirs" of Ezra)

and some confusion of historical data. The work of NEHEMIAH in Jerusalem was most certainly before that of EZRA, and the whole story should be read in that sequence. Nehemiah heard of the situation in Jerusalem *circa* 444 B.C., EZRA reached Jerusalem *circa* 397 B.C., and the Chronicler edited the two books, writing 1 and 2 Chronicles to preface them, *circa* 250 B.C. HAGGAI dates his prophecies in 520 B.C., and ZECHARIAH his (ch. i-viii: ix-xiv belong to 300-200 B.C.), 520 and 518 B.C.: the purpose of both prophets was to stir up the people to take their part in restoring the Temple.

An important historical note is found in Haggai i. 1. Till the Exile Judah was governed by a king, and prophets advised, encouraged or warned him and his people. The return from Babylon was under a twofold leadership, "governor of Jerusalem" and "high priest," which in course of time, after the successful revolt of the Maccabees, became a HIGH PRIESTLY KINGSHIP. Thus, "the Jewish State of these times . . . is contrasted both with the old Judaic Kingdom and with neighbouring communities in that it looks less like a state and more like a church" (Edwyn Bevan, *op. cit.*, p. 7*f.*, describing how the power of the priests grew).

Cyrus' references to Yahweh (Ezra i. 2-3) show either that he believed in one God known and named differently by different peoples, or (more probably) that the Chronicler improves upon Cyrus' own words (see Caiger, p. 180). The restoration of the Temple vessels (Ezra i. 4) was of great importance to the Jews and the spirit of Cyrus was very different from that of the Pharaoh (Exod. xi. 1-2, xii. 31-6).

Ezra iii. 7-13, depicts a difficult and costly undertaking in the quarrying of stone and transport of timber for THE NEW TEMPLE. The altar had already been set up (Ezra iii. 2). Great exultation followed the laying of the foundations (536, under Cyrus). This was due as

much to the long experience of deprivation and hope deferred during the Exile as to the actual achievement, which those who could still picture Solomon's Temple found sadly disappointing, especially, perhaps, because they had now expected something still more magnificent in accordance with Ezek. xl-xlviii (cf. Hag. ii. 3-9; Zech. iv. 10). At this point the work of building was apparently interrupted until 520, when it was resumed in response to the appeals of Haggai and Zechariah. Some scholars think it was not actually begun till 520. The Temple was completed and dedicated in 516.

The devastated state of Jerusalem (especially in contrast with the ease and luxury of Babylon) chilled the enthusiasm of the returning exiles, who became absorbed in securing their own comfort, though, as Haggai ironically observes (i. 6), with poor results. Haggai chose a politically propitious moment to urge, like Ezekiel, the rebuilding of the Temple and the re-establishment of ritual worship. The accession of Darius I in 522 was followed by insurrections in various parts of the Empire (Hag. ii. 6 *f.*, 21 *f.*) and the Persians were too preoccupied to repress anything which might appear like a revival of Jewish nationalism under the native governor, Zerubbabel, whom Cyrus had appointed.

The dramatic story of NEHEMIAH is probably an autobiographical document incorporated in the complete book Ezra-Nehemiah. It begins in 445. The Artaxerxes of ii. 1 is Artaxerxes I (464-424). The Artaxerxes under whom Ezra went from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra vii. 1) is Artaxerxes II (404-359). Confusion between the two kings led to the supposition that Ezra's work preceded Nehemiah's. The "governors beyond the river" (Neh. ii. 9; cf. Ezra v. 3, 6) were the Persian satraps of the regions west of the Tigris. Sanballat (a Babylonian name) of Beth-horon (north of

Jerusalem) was governor of Samaria; Tobiah represents the traditional foes of Israel, the Ammonites of the south; both belonged to groups which could claim blood-kinship with Israel, but Gashmu (Geshem) was alien, and the Ashdodites were Philistine.

Nehemiah's character as well as his achievement is worth study. There is something of the prophet in him. His prayers (Neh. iv. 4-5) are notable. He is shrewd, practical and wastes no time: according to vi. 15 the wall was finished in a couple of months, but xiii. 6 indicates that he was at Jerusalem for twelve years before he returned to Babylon to ask for further leave. Clearly he must have devoted a great deal of time to the moral and religious reforms illustrated in xiii. This part of his work was no less important than his building, especially the insistence (xiii. 23) upon Jewish separatism and exclusiveness which Ezra carried further. No doubt the REFUSAL OF HELP FROM THE SAMARITANS and others (cf. Ezra iv. 2-3 for a previous rejection of such aid when the Temple was being built) was due largely to fear lest Jewish religion should be corrupted, rather than to mere pride in purity of blood.

EZRA's memoirs appear to be the source of Ezra viii. 21-36: as also, perhaps, of the Chronicler's story in Ezra vii. As news from Jerusalem distressed Nehemiah, so reports of a falling away after Nehemiah's reformation moved Ezra. But Ezra's purpose (Ezra vii. 10) was still more important for the maintenance and growth of Judaism than Nehemiah's, and the climax of his mission came when he read THE LAW to the people (Neh. viii; see p. 113).

During the Exile the sacred writings had been studied, re-edited and codified. Some scholars now think that the Law which Ezra went to Jerusalem to teach was not the Pentateuch in its final form (the Priestly revision of J E and D), since the Priestly Code,

P, was not then complete (see Lofthouse, p. 199); but the Pentateuch was as we now have it when the Samaritans seceded, not later than 332 (cf. p. 131). In any case Ezra vii. 10 suggests that "a scribe such as Ezra was had three objects, to study the *Torah*, to carry it out, and to teach it to the community (cf. Isa. xlii. 1 ff.). Nothing could show more clearly that the 'law' or *Torah* was not regarded as a body of authoritative statutes, but as a collection of ancient texts, which had to be investigated and perhaps collated, and then expounded and commended to the obedience of society" (Lofthouse, p. 203). In his work we may see the beginning of that emphasis upon the interpretation as well as the preservation of the Law which gave THE SCRIBES their authority in the time of Jesus and became an undue subservience to "THE TRADITIONS" (Mark vii. 5, 9, 13).

Ezra was a man of faith (viii. 22) and relied upon persuasion rather than upon authority, so that he got the people themselves to take the initiative in reform (x. 2-5: "made . . . to swear" does not necessarily mean compelled). But his order to put away foreign wives was drastic, justified only by deep conviction that mixed marriages led to laxity in religious belief and practice (cf. ix. 9-15; see p. 129). "The Nethinim" (vii. 7) were probably minor Temple officials, perhaps a class of Levites.

The SAMARITANS at first were not only of mixed Jewish and foreign blood (cf. p. 111) but also mingled the worship of Yahweh with that of pagan deities (2 Kings xvii). The Jewish and Jahwistic element seems to have prevailed, however, and by the time of Nehemiah there was considerable connection between the most influential Samaritans and the priestly aristocracy in Jerusalem. This Nehemiah attacked in his zeal to "cleanse them (the Jews) from all strangers

and to purify worship and the priesthood" (Neh. xiii. 28-30). Josephus (*Antiquities*, Bk. XI, chaps. vii-viii) says that Manasseh, son of the Jewish high-priest John, or Joshua, married the daughter of Sanballat (sent into Samaria by Darius), refused to divorce his wife, and was promised by Sanballat that a temple should be built on Mount Gerizim and he should be priest. Scholars have suggested that the Sanballat and Manasseh of a century earlier (Neh. xiii. 28) are really those concerned, and alternatively that there were two such pairs. Zech. vii and viii show the desire of the Samaritans expressed by a deputation to be associated with the Jews, and Jewish disbelief in their sincerity. Isa. lxvi. 5-6, refers sympathetically to them and Ps. lxxx. 1-3 may have been written at this time in Samaria. The Samaritans adopted the Pentateuch as their Holy Scriptures, lived by the Law, and were popularly regarded in Jesus' time as differing from orthodox Jews chiefly in believing that men ought to worship at Gerizim, not at Jerusalem (John iv. 19-25). Racial and religious antagonism remained acute (John iv. 9, viii. 48; cf. and contrast Matt. x. 5, written like John by a Jew, and Luke ix. 52 ff., x. 33 ff., xvii. 16, by a Gentile). The Samaritans have persisted as a distinct sect and community till the present time.

At each of the great Jewish festivals one of the five *Megilloth*, or "Rolls" (booklets, as we might say) was read—RUTH at Pentecost. It is really a post-exilic "novel with a purpose" directed against the severity of Nehemiah and Ezra concerning mixed marriages, and may reflect "the broader outlook of Deutero-Isaiah" (cf. Wheeler Robinson, *The Old Testament*, p. 72). Ruth was a Moabitess, and thus an alien had a place in the ancestry of the royal and sacred Davidic line itself, despite the injunction of Deut. xxiii. 3.

The book of JONAH is another such tale, but one that

presents a prophetic message. Written somewhere between 450 and 250 B.C., it makes use of legendary material and even of folk-lore. The name of the hero seems to be borrowed from 2 Kings xiv. 25. The story appeals to the Jews, now re-established in their own land, to recognise their divine vocation, which is not to become a strong, exclusive nation, valuing security merely for the sake of building up ritual worship in Jerusalem, but to be a missionary people (cf. Isa. xlix. 6, xlii. 6). The writer adds force to his challenge by making Nineveh, the one-time capital of the cruel Assyrians from whom the Jews had suffered more than from any other enemy in their history, the scene of Jonah's evangelistic errand. Jonah's recalcitrance is due to his nationalism and he is won to responsiveness by the mingled power and mercy of God interpreted to him through the gourd episode (Jonah iv). The "great fish" part of the story (i. 17-ii. 10) is allegory, not miracle, and may possibly be symbolic of the swallowing up of the Jews by Babylon in the Exile: the figure, or myth, occurs elsewhere in the Old Testament (cf. Jer. li. 34, 44). The real burden of the book is that God is Lord of all peoples and cares for all, heathen and rebellious though some may be.

B. The Coming of the Greeks.

(i) *Historical Background.* The Persian Empire was overthrown by ALEXANDER THE GREAT, who became King of Macedon at the age of 20 in 336 B.C., won supremacy over all Greece in 335, and then began a campaign against Darius III, defeating him at Issus in 333 and conquering Asia as far as the plains of the Indus as well as subjugating Egypt. While consolidating this world-empire he died at Babylon of fever in 323 (1 Macc. i. 1-7; Dan. xi. 3-4).

He was not only a military genius but also a lover

and missionary of culture. Plato died just after Alexander was born and Aristotle was his tutor. He took scientists and philosophers with him on his campaigns, built Greek cities in his new domains (e.g. Alexandria) or colonised existing ones with Greeks (e.g. Samaria), and introduced everywhere the Greek language, which became a *lingua franca* for educated people and was used in the rapid extension of commerce like English in many parts of the world to-day. He established gymnasia, hippodromes, theatres and colonnades which were centres of physical and intellectual education as well as of amusement, especially for the young men. Thus the empire was unified and the spread of Greek thought concerning the universe and the conduct of life was made possible. The world was hellenised (Greeks were known as Hellenes), not so much by the wholesale supplanting of other social, philosophical and religious systems as by the penetration of them.

What the brute force of other invasions had failed to accomplish among the Jews this spreading of Greek civilisation achieved. Judaism was deeply influenced. Alexander himself marched on Jerusalem because at first the Jews resisted the Greek incursion, but according to Josephus (*Antiquities*, XI, viii, quoted by Thomas, *Short Course*, p. 44) he was impressed by the procession of priests which met him and recalled a dream of his, so that he gave Jews special privileges throughout the empire. Like other cities, Jerusalem soon adopted features of Greek life, but Jewish monotheism, ritual worship and morality developed an enduring tension with the Greek outlook and morals, more especially because in Palestine the baser elements of Hellenism became manifest. Thenceforward there was a struggle between JUDAIZERS and HELLENISERS. Later it affected the early Christian Church, as *Acts* and Paul's letters show. Even to our own day in Europe the Hebrew and

the Greek spirit have been opposed, though Western civilisation has absorbed much from both. In the second century B.C. the conflict between them produced the Jewish revolt under the Maccabees and the rule of the Hasmonians in Jerusalem (p. 142). Growing Hellenisation resulted in a Jewish "Wisdom" literature (p. 138), and in the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into the SEPTUAGINT Greek version, made at Alexandria (third and second centuries B.C.) for the many Jews there and elsewhere who had come to use Greek as their chief language. The Septuagint spread knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures and the Apocrypha, which it included, among non-Jews all over the world. It is of great value now because the oldest extant Hebrew MSS. of the Old Testament are not earlier than the ninth century A.D. The earliest bit of Septuagint MS., recently discovered, comes from the second century B.C. and is now in the Rylands Library, Manchester. (Cf. Skinner, *Concerning the Bible*, pp. 43 f.; Kenyon, *Our Bible and The Ancient Manuscripts*, p. 63).

When Alexander died his most powerful subordinates strove for supremacy and the Empire soon fell apart into three main areas—Greece, Egypt, and Asia. In 301, after much fighting, Demetrius ruled Greece as "general," the Ptolemies Egypt, and Antigonos and Seleucus were rivals for the rule of Asia. Ptolemy I took Palestine in 320, seizing Jerusalem, Josephus says, on a Sabbath day when the Jews would not fight. He had to give way for a time to Lysimachus of Greece in 315 and again to Antigonos in 312, from which year Seleucus dated the era of Seleucid dominance over Asia, including Syria. From 301 to 203, however, the Ptolemies were masters of Palestine, which was ruled by a high priest, paid tribute to Egypt, but was left very free and in fact yielded considerably to Hellenistic influence, though during this period the Chronicler

edited Ezra-Nehemiah and wrote 1 and 2 Chronicles (see p. 126).

(ii) *The Literature.* The Jewish rabbis closed the canon of the Old Testament (i.e. determined finally what books were to be included in it) some years after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Alongside it, however, they preserved THE APOCRYPHA (Greek for "hidden"), to be studied by "the wise" but not given to the multitude (2 Esdras xiv. 44-7). For the first two centuries of the Christian Church the Apocryphal books were regarded as "inspired" in the same sense as the Old Testament. In the fifth century Jerome distinguished the Old Testament books as "canonical" from the Apocrypha as "ecclesiastical"—i.e. used by the Church though not sacred Scriptures like the Old and New Testaments. This distinction persists in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, which describe the Apocrypha as read by the Church "for example of life and instruction of manners," while portions are included among the Lessons prescribed for Morning and Evening Prayer; but the Nonconformist Westminster Confession of 1647 says that they are not "to be otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings." In 1546 at the Council of Trent the Roman Catholic Church declared the Apocrypha also to be canonical: they form part of the Rheims and Douai translation of the Bible made in 1582-1609 for use by Roman Catholics.

Without these books we should know little (except from Josephus) of the important political and religious developments among the Jews from the time of Ezra to the birth of Christ, and should not understand aright many things in the Gospels. (N.B. The case is different with the APOCRYPHAL BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, which add practically nothing to what we learn from the canonical New Testament, are in large part puerile

and superstitious, and have never been regarded by the Church as in any sense authoritative).

"The variety of subject matter is amazing," says Oesterley (*Introduction to the Books of the Apocrypha*, S.P.C.K., 10s. 6d., p. 8) and he specifies history—heroic, military, diplomatic—in *Maccabees*; romance in *Tobit*; myth in *Bel and the Dragon*; *midrash* (a story, not necessarily historical, to enforce and illustrate religious teaching) in *1 Esdras*; Wisdom-writing in *Ecclesiasticus* and *Wisdom*; philosophy in the first part of *Wisdom*; folk-lore (in Tob. vii. 16, 17; Bar. ii. 24); pictures of social life in *Ecclus.*; dogmatic religious teaching in almost every book; prophecy in *Baruch*; visions in *2 Esdras*; prayers, psalms, religious poetry and liturgical pieces in different books; eschatology and apocalyptic in *2 Esdras*. "The outlook of the various writers differs in accordance with the rising distinction between Pharisee and Sadducee, while some traces of Stoic influence also appear." For the sake of consistency we follow Oesterley's dating of the books from which the *Syllabus* selections come.

Like Joshua and Judges, or Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, 1 and 2 Maccabees record the same story in different ways. *1 Maccabees* (circa 90–70 B.C.) narrates events from the death of Alexander to the establishment of the Hasmonean dynasty in Jerusalem after the Maccabean revolt, ending with the accession of John Hyrcanus in 135. *2 Maccabees* (circa 50 B.C.), in the form of a letter in Greek to the Jews of Alexandria, recounts episodes in a longer history (2 Macc. ii. 23), and is Pharisaic in tone. *1 Esdras* ("The Greek Ezra," circa 300 B.C.) appears to be an older translation from the original of Ezra-Nehemiah, adding iii. 1–v. 6. *2 Esdras* (circa A.D. 100, chaps. i, ii, xv, xvi later) purports to be written by Ezra the Scribe from Babylon about 556 B.C., though Ezra's mission was in fact more than

a century later (p. 127); the author was a Christian, possibly Jewish. *Tobit* (circa 200 B.C.) is, like Ruth and Jonah, a moral tale.

Ecclesiasticus (200–180 B.C.) and *Wisdom* (circa A.D. 40) belong, with the canonical *Proverbs* (circa 400–200 B.C.) to the great body of Jewish WISDOM LITERATURE which is so outstanding a product of the earlier part of these four centuries before Christ was born. Ben-Sira was a *Hakam* ("Wise man," or sage) of Jerusalem (Ecclus. i. 27), where he would have a room in which he taught (*Beth-ha-Midrash*, "House of Learning," or of "Instruction," where men seek Wisdom, li. 23): he would be a *sofer*, or scribe (xxxix. 1–11, 12 ff.): he probably travelled widely, perhaps on diplomatic missions, and so was influenced the more by Hellenistic thought: contact with all sorts and conditions of men gave him insight into human nature, while duty to God was his guiding principle. Ben-Sira's grandson translated the Hebrew original into Greek in 132 B.C., and in the Prologue describes his grandfather's devotion to the Hebrew Scriptures (cf. xxxix. 1–3, xlv-l. 24). Box ("Clarendon Bible," V, p. 163) observes that Ecclus. "reveals the transition from the earlier Wise to the later Scribes," and remarks (p. 166) that the picture in Ecclus. vi. 32–7 is typical of an oriental school.

It is uncertain who wrote *The Wisdom of Solomon*, or when. The general view is that the writer was a Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria who followed a well-understood literary device in attributing the book, as *Proverbs* was attributed, to Solomon, the typical "wise man" of Hebrew tradition as David was the typical psalmist.

Proverbs is "a collection of collections," containing seven groups (indicated by sub-headings) of which the Introduction on Wisdom (i-ix) is the latest, while the second (x-xxii. 16) and fourth (xxv-xxix) are regarded as "Solomonic," the second being perhaps the earliest

among the seven. The Hebrew *marshal* means much more than our common use of the word "proverb" implies: it includes "likeness," comparison, or symbolic saying (e.g. Jer. xxxi. 29; Ezek. xviii. 2), no less than short popular saying (1 Sam. x. 12, xix. 24) or longer allegory (Ezek. xvii. 2 ff.). The other "Wisdom" books in the Old Testament are Job and Ecclesiastes.

The Hebrew conception of Wisdom was influenced by the Greek philosophical belief in an orderly, intelligible, harmonising principle which pervaded the universe and gave meaning to the life of man. The Hebrew mind was practical and moralistic, expressing itself concretely, and dominated by the conviction that God is a personal creator and governor of all things and all men; even the attributes of God such as Wisdom were almost personalised by Jewish writers (e.g. Prov. viii. 22-31 and Wisd. vii. 24-7). *Wisdom* is the most philosophical of Hebrew books, but the second part of it is so practical that the emphasis on Wisdom may be missed. Ben-Sira in *Ecclesiasticus* is a great painter of things as they are, in familiar and public life, as in Nature, but he finds Wisdom everywhere. *Proverbs* may appear to be a series of disjointed but shrewd and sometimes pious sayings, yet these are so grouped as to bring out the importance of letting Wisdom determine one's way of life, and the book ends with a poem in praise of the virtuous woman (xxxix. 10-31). The passages in the *Syllabus* are therefore not to be taken as haphazard specimens, which we may divorce with harm from their context, any more than the books as wholes are systematic ethical, philosophical, or theological treatises. They present life in all its variety as the sensible religious man sees and understands ...

Through the book of Wisdom runs a further thought of Wisdom as the Word (*Logos*) of God, His effective agent (ix. 1, xvi. 12, xviii. 15, 16). This not only bridges

the gulf between the Greek idea of wisdom (*Sophia*, the term used in the titles of the Septuagint *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*) and the Hebrew, but also prepares the way for the Hellenistic interpretation of the Christian Doctrine of Incarnation in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel (p. 268.). Some scholars, however, think that *Logos* here is equivalent to the Hebrew *Memra*, or will, of Yahweh, "the customary Jewish periphrasis for the Lord," meaning "the divine Being in self-manifestation." (On the Wisdom books see Box, pp. 118-27.)

(iii) *The Jewish Teacher and New Ideas*. "The scribe of Ben-Sira's age," says Edwyn Bevan, "does not seem to have been like the scribe of the New Testament. The business of the New Testament scribe was mainly legal, fixing with indefatigable minuteness, according to the tradition of the elders, exactly how the general commands of the Law were to be applied to the infinitely various circumstances of life—what actions broke and what did not break the Sabbath day, what constituted ceremonial defilement, and so on. We find nothing of this in Ben-Sira. When he speaks of the commandments of God, he thinks of 'judgment, mercy and faith' rather than of the tithes of mint and anise and cummin. And the scribe was to look round on life, not to find difficult cases for his legal subtilty, but to observe the broad principles which governed the action of individuals and of society, the characteristic features of human nature, the chain of cause and effect in the moving world. He was to take as his guide in doing so the mass of 'brief sententious precepts' which came down to him from former sages, but he was not to be satisfied with mere repetition. His own observation was to add to the store for those to come (Ecclus. xviii. 29; cf. xxi. 15). You will see how a book of this kind is exactly what we want in order to lift the veil from the Jerusalem of 200 B.C." (*Jerusalem Under the High Priests*,

p. 50; the whole chapter should be read if possible.)

1 Macc. i. 1-7 is wrong in saying that Alexander divided his kingdom; see p. 134. It is better to take 1 Macc. i. 8-64, and Antiochus, with section C., below. There is no subtlety in Prov. xvii. 1-10; these maxims of conduct are more like our English "proverbial philosophy."

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C. The Jews' Bid for Freedom.

Seleucus' successors became masters of Asia and were almost invariably called either Seleucus or Antiochus. Seleucus I, Nicator, ruled from Babylon but later made Antioch on the Orontes the capital of

Syria, his western province (i.e. the old Assyria and the country west of it). The Seleucidæ continued Alexander's policy of building Greek cities, and among others, those known as the Decapolis were established. They contested the control of Palestine with the Egyptian Ptolemies in 295 and 219, and Antiochus III, the Great, finally conquered it.

The Ptolemies and the Seleucidæ were both Hellenisers, the first mildly, the second fiercely. ANTIOCHUS IV, EPIPHANES, invaded Egypt in 170 and 168, but was forced by the Romans, now gaining imperial power, to withdraw. As he returned, frustrated and angry, he made Palestine and Judaism scapegoats of his wrath and sought to eliminate these obstacles to that complete Hellenisation of his dominions which had become his passion. He was perhaps encouraged by the fact that Hellenism was spreading in Jerusalem (1 Macc. i. 11 ff.; 2 Macc. v. 7 ff.). To the writers of Maccabees and Daniel he was the incarnation of wickedness, brutal and impious, for his title "Epiphanes" asserted the claim to divine eminence which was not unusual among imperialist dictators of that time, though it had political rather than religious significance. The story is told in 1 Macc. i. 16-64. Behind it lies that of the sons of Tobias, a rich priestly family who intrigued against the High Priest, Onias III, causing violent faction which Antiochus had "settled" by deposing Onias in 173, thus opening the way to the evils touched upon in 1 Macc. i. 11-16. The climax came when a small Greek altar (probably with an image of Zeus) was erected upon the great altar of burnt offering in the Temple (1 Macc. i. 54; cf. Daniel ix. 27, xi. 31, xii. 11; Matt. xxiv. 15). Antiochus forbade the practice of circumcision and ordered all copies of the sacred Scriptures to be burnt. In reality he was aiming at the unification and Hellenisation of his realm as the one chance of

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preserving its integrity and distinctiveness against the growth of Roman power and influence, and since the conservative section of the Jews alone in his dominions resisted this he attacked them, perhaps in the belief that the majority of the Jewish people were with him (cf. Domitian and the Christians, p. 261). He is the "little horn" of Dan. viii. 9 ff., vii. 24 ff., and is contemptuously described in Dan. xi. 21 ff. as the Book of Revelation describes Nero (p. 260).

A graphic account of THE REVOLT OF THE MACCABEES under Mattathias and his sons is given in 1 Macc. ii-iii. Simon, grandfather of Mattathias, was son of Asmoneus, whence the title "HASMONEANS," given to the family when, after the revolt, they became princes of Jerusalem (Josephus, *Antiquities*, XII, vi, 1). Maccabæus is said to be derived from Heb. *makkebāh*, a small hammer (cf. with Judas Maccabæus, Charles Martel, "The Hammer," the hero of successful resistance to the Saracens in the eighth century A.D.). The HASIDÆANS (ii. 42; R.V. marg. *Chasidim*, Heb. *Hasidim*) were the "pious" or "godly men" devoted to reverent observance of the Law as opposed to prevailing Hellenising tendencies; they are not mentioned again after vii. 13, but their tradition was taken up by the Pharisees (see p. 148). "The King's friends" (ii. 18, x. 65, xi. 27) is a description of royal officials under the Persian and Greek emperors and kings which also occurs frequently in Egyptian papyri.

By 165 JUDAS MACCABÆUS was in control of Judæa, and had driven Lysias, Antiochus' deputy, back to Antioch. Antiochus died in 164 and the Hellenists in Jerusalem, from their citadel (1 Macc. i. 33 f.), appealed to Lysias, now regent for the young son of Antiochus. Lysias invaded Judæa and defeated Judas, but was compelled to return to Antioch, after making very favourable terms with the Jews, because a son of

Seleucus I named Demetrius, who had been kept in Rome as a hostage, had escaped and was now claiming the throne. Demetrius succeeded and put Lysias to death. A Hebrew of the priestly class named, in Greek, Alcimus (1 Macc. vii. 3 ff.) emerged as leader of the opposition to the Hasmoneans and by intrigue became High Priest. He managed to divorce the Hasidæans (*Chasidim*) from the Hasmoneans (1 Macc. vii. 12 ff.), who were expelled by Demetrius' forces from Jerusalem, but Judas won a great victory over the Syrians at Adasa. Shortly afterwards he was defeated and killed (161 B.C.) and the Syrians established Alcimus and the Hellenising Jews in Jerusalem.

The story of Judas' alliance with Rome (1 Macc. viii) has been challenged, but it is known from other sources that Rome disapproved of Demetrius' seizure of the Syrian kingship, and the treaty is typical of those which Rome concluded with independent peoples. In viii. 14-16 there are inaccuracies (e.g. there were two Roman Consuls) but the description is interesting as indicating a period of friendliness between Rome and the Jews which had important results (cf. p. 153).

The book of *Daniel* was written during the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes to encourage faith and loyalty even to the point of martyrdom (cf. the Jews who would die rather than break the Sabbath by fighting Antiochus' emissaries; 1 Macc. ii. 29-38: p. 134). Earlier hero-stories were therefore recalled at the same time as present oppression was described and denounced and the resistance by Judas recorded (Dan. xi. 31 ff., vii. 25, ix. 27). The outlook is that of the Hasidæans with their puritan spirit, and the note of hope amidst overwhelming suffering is struck by insisting that God would intervene catastrophically. *Daniel* (vii-xii) is the one APOCALYPTIC book in the Old Testament, as *Revelation* is in the New, but from the

Maccabean age onwards for nearly three centuries Jewish and then Christian Apocalypses appeared in times of persecution, expressing, usually under the form of strange and violent imagery, the conviction that God would break in upon the world to make an end of evil powers and to establish His Kingdom. Apocalypticism is one of the chief characteristics of religious development during the pre-Christian and early Christian epochs.

Aramaic, akin to Hebrew, was the popular language of Palestine at this time and in slightly differing forms was understood, like Greek, all over the East. Dan. ii. 46-vii is in Aramaic, the remainder in Hebrew. The author is not known. The stories in chaps. i-vi are all in the nature of *midrash* (cf. p. 136), unhistorical though perhaps with a basis in tradition. The quasi-historical references in the book (e.g. Dan. i. 1, or the chronology by which Nebuchadrezzar was succeeded by Belshazzar, Darius the Mede, and Cyrus) cannot be reconciled with Kings or with Chronicles-Nehemiah-Ezra. Actually Belshazzar was son of the last King of Babylon, Nabonidus, who was overthrown by Cyrus in 538. The purpose of Daniel, however, is not historical but hortatory. It "brings the reader into the very heart and soul of Judaism when it was faced with the most tremendous crisis of its history" (Box), formulates the Apocalyptic hope and vision (as the Unknown Prophet of Isa. xl-lv had formulated the Messianic), and introduces belief in the RESURRECTION of both the righteous and the wicked (Dan. xii. 2, 12) which was new to Judaism. Isaiah xxiv-xxvii also is apocalyptic, probably a little earlier than Daniel, and speaks of the annihilation of death in the Messianic Age (Isa. xxv. 8), but maintains that resurrection is for the righteous alone (Isa. xxvi. 14, 19).

DANIEL was a mythical hero (Ezek. xiv. 14, 20,

xxviii. 3) and Dan. iii, vi may rest upon existing legends. But the fiery furnace story (cf. Jer. xxix. 22) reflects the demand of Antiochus Epiphanes (p. 141) that worship should be paid to himself and to the image of Olympian Zeus (which is said to have had resemblances to him), while the story of the lions' den ("Darius the Mede" is unknown to history) is simply a fine example of the Hebrew genius for "truth embodied in a tale." Unshakable belief in the triumph of faith, loyalty and courage, based on certainty of God, is the essence of Dan. i-vi. (cf. p. 234).

D. The Rule of the Priests.

The rededication of the Second Temple (1 Macc. iv. 36-61) should be compared with Solomon's dedication of the First (1 Kings viii) and the original dedication of the Second (Ezra vi. 14-22). From this time the Feast of Dedication became one of the chief events in the Jewish "Church Year" (cf. John x. 22).

Judas' brothers Jonathan and Simon, who were forced to fly when he was killed, returned to Judæa under Demetrius, whose claim to the throne was contested by the impostor Alexander. Jonathan seized the chance of obtaining reinstatement, with a military force, at Jerusalem and then of being made High Priest (152 B.C.). Jonathan and Simon strengthened their political and military position but the treachery of a Syrian general ended in Jonathan's death, 142 B.C., and Simon succeeded him.

SIMON, 142-135, really re-established Jewish political independence and initiated the rule of the HASMONEAN PRIEST-KINGS, himself being High Priest and civil governor of Judæa. He is notable for the firm relationship with Syria and Rome that he maintained (for "King's Friends" see p. 142), his care for the religious as well as the political and social welfare of his people,

his determination to make this form of religio-political government permanent and hereditary (which explains the position of the HIGH PRIESTS AND SADDUCEES in the time of Christ), and his personal qualities. The Jews never ceased to look back to the reign of David as their golden age, but that of Simon was regarded with almost equal esteem and enthusiasm. xiv. 41 contains a note of caution (cf. Ezra ii. 63): to alter the high-priestly succession without reserve might allow the political element again to predominate over the religious, but no one of the pronouncedly prophetic type was, or had for a long time been, forthcoming. Ps. cx. 1, 4 may refer to Simon.

Ecclus. xlv. 1-15 is familiar through use on our commemoration days. It introduces a great hero-roll of Jewish history culminating in the panegyric on Simon, Ecclus. l.

The religious differences between PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES are closely related to political events after the death of Simon. The Hasidæans or *Chasidim* had been chiefly concerned with the emancipation and purification of Judaism under the Hasmoneans, who, however, had become more princes than priests, so that the Hasidæans turned from them and responded all too readily to Alcimus, (p. 143). JOHN HYRCANUS (135-105 B.C.), Simon's son and successor (1 Macc. xvi), was attacked and defeated by Antiochus VII, Sidetes; Jerusalem was demilitarised but John was left as ruler of Judæa and led a Jewish contingent in Antiochus' army against Parthia. On returning he strengthened Judæa by capturing Shechem, the Samaritans' chief town, and demolishing their Temple on Mount Gerizim, as also by invading and forcibly Judaising Idumea (the ancient Edom), of which he made Antipater, father of Herod the Great, governor (p. 153). He also overthrew Samaria, which was Greek (cf.

p. 130). His son Aristobulus was the first Hasmonean to assume the title of King (being still High Priest) and his one year of rule showed him to be ruthless. He conquered and forcibly Judaised GALILEE (till then Syrian and Greek)—“a province where the population is largely non-Jewish by race, but Jewish in religion.” He was succeeded by ALEXANDER JANNAEUS (104-78), a rough soldier who functioned as High Priest but flouted the Pharisees, now very influential with the people. Thus (Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIII, xiii, 5) at the Feast of Tabernacles he poured the water on the ground, a Sadducean custom, instead of on the altar as the Pharisees thought right. The people pelted him with the lemons they carried, a riot ensued, quelled by Greek mercenaries, and 6,000 people lost their lives within the Temple precincts. In 94 B.C. the Pharisees seized a chance of revolt in Jerusalem and civil war in Judæa for six years resulted: the Pharisees called in the Syrians under Demetrius III and Alexander was forced to fly to the mountains. His plight evoked reaction in his favour among the people, so that he was able to return, compel Demetrius to withdraw, and drive the Pharisees into exile, crucifying some 800 who could not escape. But though Alexander dealt thus with the anti-Hellenistic Pharisees he himself disliked Greek culture and destroyed much of the Greek civilisation in Palestine. Alexander's widow, Alexandra (Salome), reigned from 78-69 and her son Hyrcanus was High Priest. She recalled the Pharisees, who regained influence, revived the practice of the Law in accordance with their traditions, and set up elementary schools. They also persecuted the Sadducees, whom, however, Aristobulus, Alexandra's other son, championed, filling the garrison with their partisans (see Box, “Clarendon Bible,” Vol. V, pp. 44-9).

The name PHARISEE means “separated,” either in the

sense of seeking legal purity by avoidance of all that would defile, or in that of antagonism to the King, or in that of detachment from other groups in the Sanhedrin. As a party the Pharisees are first mentioned in the time of John Hyrcanus, whom Josephus describes as a disciple of theirs, greatly beloved (*Antiquities*, XIII, x, 5-6), going on to say "the Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances by succession from their fathers which are not written in the law of Moses; and for that reason it is that the Sadducees reject them, and say that we are to esteem those observances to be obligatory which are in the written word, but are not to observe what are derived from the tradition of our fathers." The *Soferim*, or earlier scribes (cf. Ben-Sira, p. 137), taught the people out of the Book of the Law and should really be called "bookmen," being concerned only with the plain and simple text of the Mosaic Law. They ceased to be influential about 270 B.C. and the *Chasidim*, or Hasidæans, took their place but paid greater attention to the application of the written Law (cf. p. 142). Times had changed greatly even from those of Ezra, and people needed to know how to act in these new situations without breaking the Law. The SANHEDRIN was formed about 190 B.C. as "an authoritative body consisting of priests and lay teachers, which was able to regulate officially the religious affairs of the people" (Box). Dispute arose as to whether interpretations of the Law must receive priestly sanction or whether the findings of the lay teachers should be justified by reference to the Law alone. The *Chasidim* took the latter view. The priestly element in the Sanhedrin thus became conservative defenders of the plain Law, and included the nobility who supported the Maccabean princes: they would have nothing to do with the new doctrines of resurrection, or of angels, and took the name SADDUCEE

either as emphasising the authority of priestly descent (Sons of Zadok, see p. 98) or as insisting upon their orthodoxy (*Saddik*, "righteous") in contrast with the Pharisees. The latter were laymen, and most, though not all, the Scribes (who were the authorised students and teachers of the Law) were Pharisees. A considerable body of oral teaching thus grew up, closely related to the Law, and only later becoming burdensome to the common man, though from the first it was so to the wealthy and aristocratic Sadducee. Bevan compares the Sadducees to those who in the eighteenth century "adhered to the church of the fashionable classes, resenting any religious claim upon them outside the routine of conventional decencies, and bitterly opposed the fantastic 'enthusiasm,' as they called it, of the followers of Wesley" (*Jerusalem*, p. 125). The Pharisees were democratic, poor men might be of their party, and distinguished rabbis often earned their living by practising a craft. They fostered synagogue worship and family religion (e.g. the place of the head of the household in the Passover celebration), while also they furthered popular education through the synagogue. "The Sadducees are able to persuade none but the rich, and have not the populace obsequious to them, but the Pharisees have the multitude on their side" (Josephus, *loc. cit.*). The Pharisees were credited with a great following of women, and sometimes accused of undue influence upon them. The "poor" and the "pious" had come to be almost synonymous terms, and that was one reason for the emphasis laid upon almsgiving as a religious duty (cf. p. 140). These aspects are illustrated in 1 Macc. vii. 13, Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIII, x; Judith viii. 6; Tobit xii. 9.

MESSIANIC EXPECTATIONS grew out of the idealisation of Kingship in Israel (2 Sam. vii. 12 *f.*). The golden age of David supplied pictures which prophets like Jeremiah

(xvii. 25, xxxiii. 17), Isaiah (xi. 1-5) and Zechariah (ix. 9) used in describing the great hope that the Kingdom of God would finally triumph. Cyrus (Isa. xlv. 1), though a Persian, and Zerubbabel (Hag. ii. 23; Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12) were hailed as Messianic princes. The Messiah is neither the agent in bringing in the Kingdom nor its centre, but "Yahweh's administrator, vested with powers from Him, and wholly subordinate to Him" (Wheeler Robinson, *Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, p. 199). Suffering under Antiochus, Epiphanes turned the thoughts of the pious to God and the coming of His Kingdom. Apocalyptists and psalmists made much of this theme. The Maccabean victories and the glorious reign of Simon enhanced the hope once more, and the Pharisaic teaching about resurrection gave it deeper meaning. Many of the PSALMS were written in the Maccabean period to express this expectation (ii, xx, xxi, xlv, lxxviii, lxxxix. li may be such).

N.B.—Bevan, in Gore's *Commentary, Apocrypha*, pp. 6-8 and Box, "Clarendon Bible," V, pp. 49-56, have excellent accounts of Pharisees and Sadducees, and Loewe's essays in *Judaism and Christianity*, I (S.P.C.K., 10s. 6d.), should, if possible, be read.

E. The Dispersion.

When Cyrus in 538 released the Jews from captivity in Babylon many chose to remain, continuing in the occupations which they had been free to follow and in which they had prospered. Others went still further afield. But all maintained their loyalty to the true worship and service of God through observance of the Law, the keeping of the Sabbath, and attendance at the Synagogue, all paid a Temple tax to Jerusalem, and any who could made pilgrimage to the great festivals in the Holy City. Jer. xl-xliv presents a very

different situation. Jeremiah had advised submission to Nebuchadrezzar, acceptance of exile, and hope that God would restore His penitent people after the purging discipline of captivity. As he advised those carried captive to settle (Jer. xxix)¹ so he urged those left behind in Jerusalem to regard themselves as the nucleus meant in God's providence to keep alive in the Holy City what remained of the nation and its religious rites till God should build Zion once more. Their refusal was partly pusillanimous (xlii. 11), partly due to an ineradicable passion for syncretistic worship which had gone so far that they thought the Queen of Heaven (xliv. 16-19: cf. vii. 18, the Babylonian Ishtar or Astarte) a more powerful protector than Yahweh. Jeremiah's prophecy that Egypt should be overthrown and the fugitive Jews exterminated was begotten of political foresight and moral conviction. In the end a strong community of Jews was permanently established at ALEXANDRIA, and from that centre of Hellenised Judaism came the Septuagint, teachers like Philo, and at last the great Christian tradition to which we owe possibly the Fourth Gospel and the Epistle to the Hebrews and certainly the work of Clement and Origen.

An independent Jewish community with a magnificent synagogue at ELEPHANTINE (opposite Aswan, on the Nile, cf. p. 115) was in existence when Cambyzes conquered Egypt in 525, and may have been founded when Jewish soldiers were employed in Egypt (cf. Deut. xvii. 16). Yahweh was worshipped, but other gods and goddesses, including Anath as Yahweh's consort, also, and this may reflect early Hebrew worship in Palestine before Josiah's reformation. The Temple was destroyed in 410 by Egyptian rebels against Persian rule, and the Jews sought and received the help of the governor of Judah and the High Priest of Jerusalem in

getting permission to rebuild. The Aswan Papyri, discovered in 1903, throw much light on this: specimens are given by Lofthouse ("Clarendon Bible," IV, pp. 212-31).

During the Wars of the Jews in the Maccabean period, many were carried captive to the great cities of East and West—e.g. Antioch and Rome—and often made slaves there. When emancipated they usually remained, as craftsmen, teachers, physicians and so forth. The Synagogue of the Libertines (Acts vi. 9) may have been a group of freed Jewish slaves who had returned from Rome to Jerusalem (cf. p. 200).

The result of this Dispersion was that knowledge of the Jewish religion became widespread, synagogues were set up all over the world, and many Gentiles (often people of culture and influence like the Ethiopian Eunuch, Acts viii. 27) attended them, some becoming PROSELYTES (Acts ii. 10). On the other hand the Jews of the Dispersion themselves were liberalised. To them naturally turned the Christians scattered by the tribulation that arose about Stephen (Acts xi. 19). Antioch was the first Christian missionary headquarters (Acts xiii. 1-3), and Paul on his journeys always went first to the Synagogue in any city. Acts ii. 5-13 portrays the assembling of Jews of the Dispersion from many lands for Pentecost: all would understand Greek and Aramaic. The Pharisaic Jews themselves were eager propagandists (Matt. xxiii. 15) and the freedom of Synagogue worship, at which anyone with a knowledge of the Scriptures could be invited to speak, offered great opportunities for Christian evangelisation. The Pharisees sent emissaries, as the Judaising Christians later did, to safeguard orthodoxy (John i. 19, 24; Acts xv. 1; cf. for the Dispersion, Bevan, Gore's *Commentary, Apocrypha*, pp. 24-9; Box, "Clarendon Bible," V, pp. 56-68).

F. The Impact of Rome.

Hyrcanus II, High Priest under his mother Alexandra (p. 147), would probably have yielded the crown to his ambitious younger brother Aristobulus, but Antipater (see p. 146) dissuaded him and Aristobulus was besieged in the Temple with his Sadducean supporters. The Pharisees and many of the people wished to see the Maccabean Priest-Kingship abolished and rule restored to a high priest not concerned with political intrigue and worldly ambition as a prince. POMPEY, the Roman general, was campaigning in Asia. All three parties appealed to his lieutenant Scaurus, with the result that Pompey entered Jerusalem, stormed the Temple-hill after three months' siege, and outraged Jewish feeling by insisting out of curiosity upon going into the Holy of Holies, though he spared the Temple treasures. He left Hyrcanus as High Priest and civil governor of Judæa with the title no longer of King but of ethnarch, and took Aristobulus prisoner to Rome along with thousands of Jews who were made slaves (p. 152), but soon liberated when they refused every seventh day to work. Henceforth PALESTINE WAS PART OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

1 Macc. viii. 1-29 (see p. 143), xii. 1-23, and xiv. 24, show how consistently the Hasmoneans had cultivated friendly relations with Greece (1 Macc. xii. 7 probably refers to Areus I of Sparta, despite R.V. marg.), and may account for the readiness with which all three parties turned to Pompey. "The senate of the nation" (1 Macc. xii. 6) was the *gerousia*, or Council of Elders, which Josephus first mentions in connection with Antiochus III (the Great), may perhaps be meant in 2 Chron. xix. 8, and later became known in the time of Hyrcanus II (Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIV, ix, 4) as the Sanhedrin (see p. 148).

Antipater had designs upon Judæa. Having aided Julius Cæsar by his generalship and courage in an Egyptian campaign, he secured from Cæsar confirmation of Hyrcanus as High Priest and for himself the procuratorship of Judæa. He already "managed the Jewish affairs" (Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIV, 8), and always played up to the victor in the series of struggles for power between Pompey, Cæsar, Mark Antony and Octavian.

Antipater's son HEROD (THE GREAT), being given command in Galilee by his father, ruthlessly suppressed a rising there and was charged before the Sanhedrin with putting its leader to death without trial: he escaped condemnation but thenceforth hated the priestly aristocracy and at the beginning of his reign a little later executed forty-five of the Sadducean leaders. Antipater was poisoned in A.D. 43 and, despite a determined effort on the part of the people to get rid of the Idumean Kings, Herod secured the succession from Antony, being advanced from the status of tetrarch of Galilee to that of King of Judæa (Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIV, xiv). The people had appealed to the Parthians and had set up Antigonus, a surviving son of the Hasmonean Aristobulus, as King, but having, after a three-year siege, taken Jerusalem and the Temple, Herod beheaded Antigonus and exterminated the Hasmoneans with the exception of Mariamne, grand-daughter of Hyrcanus II, whom he married. He arbitrarily chose the priestly family of Boethus, Egyptian Jews, as that from which high priests must be drawn and from henceforth the high priest was appointed by the King. This led to a great increase in the influence of the RABBIS. "The men who knew and expounded the Law, as expert students, took the place of the priests as moral leaders of the community" (Bevan, *Gore's Commentary, Apocrypha*, p. 12).

Herod continued the policy of keeping on the right side of whoever was in power at Rome. He was an ardent Helleniser, building more Greek cities (e.g. Samaria, now called Sebaste, and Cæsarea on the coast), each having a temple for the State-worship of the Emperor; in Jerusalem he built a theatre, and an amphitheatre beyond the walls. Himself a half-Jew he affected to be equally encouraging and munificent towards Judaism, and Josephus (*Antiquities*, XV, xi) describes the magnificence of the Temple which he built to replace "the rather shabby structure which was the best that the exiles had been able to afford on their return from Babylon" (cf. Ezra iii. 12), and which had suffered several sieges. Herod had a brilliance of his own, but was ruthlessly cruel when he feared treachery or sedition. Thus he had Mariamne (to whom he was devoted) murdered in 29 B.C., and her sons in 7 B.C. He died in 4 B.C. at the age of 70, having a few days earlier had his eldest son Antipater (born of his first wife) put to death.

G. The Fulness of Time.

Excellent articles on the situation in the world at the coming of Christ will be found in all good modern Commentaries on the Gospels. There are good chapters in Gore's *Jesus of Nazareth* (H.U.L., 2s. 6d.) and Raven's *Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ* (C.U.P., 3s.); Mathews' *The World in Which Jesus Lived* and Glover's *The Ancient World* afford vivid pictures.

Rome was now complete mistress of Southern Europe, Western Asia and North Africa. At no other time in ancient history were peace so widespread, government so orderly, communications so good, and commerce so flourishing. Alexander had given the world a common language (the *Koine* Greek in which the New Testament is written) and Rome, absorbing

Greek culture, had developed in particular the noble Stoic philosophy and principles of conduct. But slavery and corresponding facilities of luxury were demoralising society. Men had no certainty of God, so that superstition on the one hand and pessimistic agnosticism on the other were characteristic of the time. New religions and theosophical cults were seized upon. Mithraism, with its doctrine of purification by baptism in the blood of a bull and its austere ethical demands, was becoming popular. Greek mystery religions, with their initiation ceremonies and teaching about "the medicine of immortality," were much followed, especially in Asia Minor. Egypt had its healing cult of Serapis. But everywhere, as Glover remarks, there was a sense of sin and a fear of death.

Meantime Judaism made an appeal because of its simple and sincere synagogue worship, its insistence upon the righteousness and love of a God who is personal and is the only God, the growth of belief in a Resurrection, and to some extent by its apocalyptic visions of a coming Kingdom of God and its expectation of a Messiah. The fine type of Pharisee, the true scribe and Rabbi, and the humble folk like Simeon who were "looking for the consolation of Israel" (Luke ii. 25) prepared the way of the Lord no less than moral reformers like John the Baptist.

II. THE UNIVERSAL GOSPEL IN CHRIST

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke are not merely elaborated duplicates of Mark. They used another common source, Q. Raven, *Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ* (C.U.P., 3s. 3d.), prints the Q passages in full (see p. 65, the Commentaries, *A Companion to the Bible*, pp. 98 ff., 114 ff. and Skinner, *Concerning the Bible*, pp. 117-26). The *Syllabus* took Mark as the basis

for the first connected study of the life of Jesus partly because it is in fact the earliest, briefest and simplest account, but also because pupils should at as early a stage as possible study a *book* in its completeness rather than a set of extracts. In some Syllabuses a complete Gospel is taken in each successive year. Here we neither go through the life of Jesus again in full detail, nor take Matthew or Luke as a complete book. The aim rather is (i) to bring out the important additional facts and interpretations afforded by Matthew and Luke; (ii) to exemplify the special characteristics and point of view of each of these Gospels. C. H. Dodd's section on "The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ" in *A Companion to the Bible* (pp. 367-89) is a brilliant condensation of fact and interpretation in relation to the sources.

Matthew is distinctively Jewish in outlook and Luke distinctively Gentile. Matthew and Luke both belong to about A.D. 80-90. Luke was probably earlier than Matthew. Manson (*Mission and Message of Jesus*, pp. 307-20) dates Q about A.D. 50, M. (Matthew's special material, derived from Jewish Christians in Judæa with their headquarters at Jerusalem) about 65, and L. (Luke's special material, gathered by Luke at Cæsarea during Paul's detention there) about 60. Q, which consists mainly of Jesus' utterances, is connected with Antioch, the first Christian missionary centre (p. 190), where converts would need instruction in the Christian manner of life as Jesus taught it. Q may have been compiled by the apostle Matthew. It is more probable that he made a collection of proof-texts (*logia*) from the Old Testament (cf. Acts xvii. 2, xviii. 28) to show how prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus, and these are constantly quoted by "Matthew" ("that it might be fulfilled which was spoken," etc.). But the Gospel as we have it was the work of an unknown author. Luke was almost

certainly by Paul's physician-friend and travel-companion (cf. p. 195). There is good reason for believing that he was closely associated with the Church at Antioch and may have been the "Lucius of Cyrene" of Acts xiii. 1 (Findlay, *Acts*, p. 47; cf. p. 195 *infra*).

The FOURTH GOSPEL (cf. p. 265-8) is generally held to be the work of John the Elder, a younger contemporary at Ephesus of the Apostle John, whose reminiscences, verbal or written, he drew upon very largely. It supplements and corrects the Synoptics in some matters of historical detail, but is in the main a reflective account in which meditation and long experience of communion with the living Christ after the Resurrection is inter-fused with narrative. It is generally dated between A.D. 90 and 120. The author is thought to have written also 1 John, perhaps 2 and 3 John, but not Revelation. R. F. Bailey's *St. John's Gospel, A Commentary for Schools* (S.C.M. Press, 5s.) is useful. Westcott's *Gospel of St. John* is a classic. Sir Edwyn Hoskyns' *The Fourth Gospel* (Faber, 2 vols., 30s.) is the best modern book for reference.

A. The Birth of Jesus Christ.

VIRGIN-BIRTH STORIES were familiar enough in religion before Christianity—in Egypt and India, in Greece and Asia Minor. But they related to mythical personages, except in the case of Gautama Buddha, and he taught that the aim of existence was to escape from personality altogether. On the other hand there were tales of men who became gods (apotheosis), and from worship of the Roman Emperor as symbolic of the State (cf. p. 261) there followed ultimately the claim that he was himself divine. The Gospels all start from another standpoint—the Jewish faith that God would visit and redeem His people (Luke i. 68). It was not prophesied that the Messiah should be divine: Jewish monotheism was too jealous for the uniqueness of God

to accept such an idea easily (John v. 18). Jesus was first recognised as the Messiah (as in Peter's confession, Mark viii. 29). His unique relationship to God was realised by His followers as they witnessed His life, death and resurrection, and therefore Christians said not only that God was *with* Him (Acts x. 38), but that God was *in* Him (2 Cor. v. 19) and that God had spoken to men not merely in a prophet but in a Son, "the very image, or impress, of His substance" (Heb. i. 2-3).

This is the Christian doctrine of THE INCARNATION, maintained as clearly by the authors of the four Gospels as by the writers of the Epistles. The opening words of Matthew and the Prologue as well as the Epilogue of John make this plain. The self-utterance of God in the historical Jesus Christ was neither a mythical story nor an apotheosis but an *act of God*, who thus entered into the conditions of human life in time and space (Phil. ii. 5-11), and of this act the Cross and Resurrection were the climax (Acts v. 30-1). How the Incarnation was possible is not discussed in the New Testament, and only Matthew and Luke, in the Birth stories, even touch upon virgin birth as the mode of it. Poetically and symbolically there could hardly be any more obvious or beautiful way of expressing a truth so profound and full of mystery as the Incarnation. The adequacy of the stories as historical evidence for the mode of Christ's conception and birth is by some denied. On the other hand the literal truth of them cannot be disproved. But many Christians who believe that Jesus was in the literal and normal sense "the carpenter's son" (Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3; Luke iv. 22) believe equally that He was the Incarnate Son of God, as truly God as He was truly man, "which is the central truth of the Christian Faith" (Archbishops' Commission Report, *Doctrine in the Church of England*, p. 83, where belief and non-belief in the Virgin Birth

are alike recognised as tenable by Trinitarian Christians). Jesus was Himself the supreme miracle (cf. p. 24), and as His miraculous acts flow from His unique relationship to God rather than prove it, so His incarnation is the vital fact, whatever the means by which it was accomplished. Both those who hold the Incarnation to be unintelligible apart from the Virgin Birth and those who find it more intelligible if the stories are taken as symbolic, must necessarily find the basis for their faith concerning the Incarnation precisely where the first Christians did, namely, in what Jesus actually was and did among men.

For this reason the *Syllabus* includes the Birth stories first at the earliest stage, when little children drink in the meaning of a story without troubling whether it is literally true or not, and then at this one, when boys and girls have passed through the necessary phase of their development when "is it true?" means "in simple fact" and are beginning to understand the relationship between undeniable truth and the variations or limitations (from which even the pure scientist suffers no less than the historian) in possible ways of stating it. The Birth stories remain inseparable from the Christian tradition because they enshrine a truth about the relationship between Jesus and God without which there could be no Christian faith and experience.

(i) *Fulfilment of the Prophetic Hope of the Nation.* Matt. i. 18-20, 25 is quite specific in affirming the Virgin-Birth of Jesus. The proof-text quoted (i. 22-3) originally had quite a different meaning (see p. 108). i. 21 strikes the keynote of the Gospel. "Jesus" is the equivalent of "Joshua," which means "Jahweh is salvation." ii. 13-23 marks the special emphasis of Matthew on the fact that Jesus was the Messiah whom the Jews expected, though here again the proof-texts (ii. 15, 17-18, 23) had originally no reference to these events.

"This use of the word 'fulfil' occurs continually in Rabbinic literature. . . . In *Sifre* on Deut. xxxiii. 24, it is related that a certain Rabbi came into the house from the fields with his friends and called to his hand-maid saying: 'Come, wash our feet.' She poured out oil into a basin and washed their feet, that it might be fulfilled which is written in Deut. xxxiii. 24, 'let him dip his foot in oil' " (Gore's *Commentary*, N.T., p. 131). Nevertheless this resort to proof-texts does not invalidate Matthew's essential claim that the self-revelation of God through the history of the Jews and the utterances of the Prophets prepared the way for His culminating self-disclosure in Jesus.

Herod the Great (ii. 1, 13) died in 4 B.C. Jesus was born in 7 B.C. or 6: the apparent paradox is due to a miscalculation in chronology not detected until recent years.

Luke's story of the ANNUNCIATION (i. 26-38) is from Mary's standpoint as Matthew's is from Joseph's, but it implies the belief in the Virgin-Birth which Matthew states more definitely. Luke also uses phrases from prophet and psalmist (i. 32-3) recalling the Jewish expectation, but not with Matthew's emphasis on literal foreknowledge and fulfilment. He is writing for non-Jewish readers in the Roman Empire, and i. 35 states the vital truth in a way applicable to the normal process of generation no less than to Virgin-Birth. The poetic character of i. 39-44 is evident from Elisabeth's phraseology (cf. note on "The Messianic Secret," p. 19).

The MAGNIFICAT, based largely on Hannah's Song (1 Sam. ii), is full of snatches from Messianic Psalms and prophetic utterances, while i. 52 is from Ecclesiasticus x. 14. Pupils should trace out the references given by R.V. The whole song will then be seen to be a picture of the hoped-for Messianic age which would

appeal strongly to humble and pious folk (cf. *Chasidim*, p. 142) like Elisabeth and Zacharias, Simeon and Anna, Joseph and Mary. It anticipates a reign of justice, peace, goodwill and righteousness, not simply in the heavenly places but on earth. The influence here of Amos and Hosea is as evident as that of Daniel and the Apocalyptists. Luke's universalism gives him marked sympathy with the poor and the lowly, as well as with women and Gentiles: this reappears all through his Gospel. ii. 8-20 brings out the fact that God loves the humble poor who do His bidding (Zeph. ii. 3), makes Himself and His purposes known to them, and values their worship and self-devotion. Concerning angels, see p. 19 f.: developing late in Judaism, under Persian influence, the belief was by now much elaborated. The seven archangels are mentioned first in Tobit xii. 15, and Gabriel in Dan. viii. 16, ix. 21. The R.V. rendering of ii. 14 is the right one.

SIMEON is typical of those who cared more for the inwardness of religion than for either ceremonial or ecclesiastical and political parties. The "consolation" was, as the rabbis said, "the days of the Messiah." In the NUNC DIMITTIS many phrases come from Isaiah (see R.V. references)—an evidence of the way in which the "pious" (in the *Chasidim* sense) meditated upon Messianic prophecies and psalms. The mention of the Gentiles (Isa. xlii. 6, xlix. 6, lii. 10, lx. 3) would appeal specially to Luke, and is another characteristic note of his Gospel. The coming of the Messiah would inevitably separate the "just" from the "unjust": setting up a standard for the people is spoken of in Isa. xi. 12, xiii. 2. Simeon's words to Mary were a natural deduction from what he had just said. The Messiah must bring judgment in this interior sense of lighting up the good and evil in each man's hidden life.

(ii) *The Saviour of the World*. At the very outset the advent of Jesus is linked not only with the hope of Israel but with the Gentile world—characteristically by Luke with the order and unity of the Roman Empire which, like the Greek civilisation spread by Alexander the Great, opened the way for the spread of the Gospel, and by Matthew with the religious or quasi-religious movements in the East which showed that men's hearts everywhere were yearning for something that only the one true God could give (cf. Isa. lv. 5). There was a Roman CENSUS every fourteen years. Luke either confused the dates of two, or was wrong in calling this "the first." Correction of this error and consequent dating of Jesus' birth in 7 or 6 B.C. has made it possible to harmonise Luke's historical references, which in themselves add to the certainty that Jesus was a real person, who lived at a time and in a place which can be specified. (For a note on the Census see Gore's *Commentary*, N.T., p. 213.)

Matt. ii. 1-12 may be "at any rate in part, a Christian *Midrash* (see p. 136) rather than authentic history" (Gore's *Commentary*, p. 132), for taken literally it has intrinsic difficulties and does not harmonise with Luke's references to Nazareth. Despite the delightful Melchior, Gaspar and Balthasar legend, bringing in Europe, Asia and Africa, the *Magi* were probably Persian astrologers, possibly priests, who shared the widespread expectation in the East that a great King from the West should bring in a happier era for the world. The Jews of the Dispersion, especially under the Persian Empire, may well have influenced Persian religious thought. The story has real significance in relation to "the failure of paganism" (p. 156) and the universality of the Gospel, which ordinarily Matthew stresses less than Luke does. The details (e.g. the star) may be taken simply as part of the dramatic setting.

B. The Historic Mission of Jesus Christ.

(i) *Baptism.* Little need be added here to the interpretation implicit in the *Syllabus* sub-headings, or to p. 18. An experience which Matthew and Mark represent as subjective and spiritual becomes in Luke an objective, miraculous fact. Q, in Matt. xi. 2, 3 and Luke vii. 19, implies that Jesus alone saw the vision and heard the voice.

(ii) *Temptation.* Matthew and Luke use Q. See the *Syllabus* note. There is a repeated challenge to Jesus' certainty about Himself—"if thou art the Son of God, . . ." and He is tempted to seek external, physical proof of a relationship essentially spiritual. Power to work miracles was regarded as evidence of special divine authority (p. 22, cf. John ii. 18, vi. 30, ix. 16).

(iii) *The Teaching of the Kingdom* (cf. p. 27). Jesus took up and transformed the conception, peculiar to the Jews, of the KINGDOM OF GOD, while also He fulfilled all that was true in it (Matt. xiii. 16-17; Luke iv. 16-21). Their ideas were coloured by their great tradition of the Golden Age of David, as also by the Messianic and Apocalyptic hopes of God's intervention, and visions of His judgment, which arose during the Exile and later under persecution (Matt. iii. 2-3; cf. pp. 143-9). Jesus taught that the Kingdom means the supremacy within men's lives, individual and corporate, of God's righteousness, love and power (cf. p. 42). It was present in Himself. It grows quietly and irresistibly among men in this world (Luke xvii. 20-1). Nevertheless it can be achieved in its fulness only in the life beyond, when sin and death have been vanquished and done away. Miracles are signs of God's sovereign grace and power, breaking into our present life when men and women are wholly responsive to Him (Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20; cf. p. 24), but the moral and

spiritual regeneration of men is a greater sign still (John iii. 3-5). Matthew stresses the Kingdom as the fulfilment of Jewish expectations; Luke emphasises its world-wide extension.

(a) *The Kingdom a present reality.* The Baptist declares that judgment (i.e. moral discernment and purification) must accompany God's rule (Matt. iii. 8-12; cf. Amos ii, iii. 2; Micah vi. 8). In such parables as the Wheat and the Tares, the Sheep and the Goats, etc. (Matt. xiii. 24-30, 36-43) Jesus points to both separation of good from evil in the individual (Mark ix. 47), and exclusion of unrepentantly evil men from the presence of God because by their own persistent self-will and folly they have made the relationship of subject to sovereign and son to father impossible (Mark x. 15; Luke xviii. 17. Cf. John xiv. 30). Only the infinite grace of God can meet man's failure and need (Mark x. 26; Matt. xix. 25-6; Luke xviii. 26-7).

On publicly declaring His mission and message in the SYNAGOGUE AT NAZARETH Jesus forthwith encountered violent opposition (Luke iv. 14-30), evoked more by wounded pride and resentment of His "presumption" than by the words in iv. 21.

Eager for the coming Messiah to reverse their lot, the people forgot Jeremiah's teaching about individual responsibility. But the "social gospel" which Jesus proclaimed was not a popular programme of economic and political reform instead of individual conversion and personal communion with God: the changed community is impossible until individuals are transformed. Yet, while going far beyond the Old Testament valuation of persons (Matt. xviii. 12; Luke xv), He taught neither religious individualism nor nationalism, and certainly His message was not "other-worldly" (Matt. v. 43-8: "perfect" means "complete," Luke xxii. 32). In Luke iv. 14-22 we find the universal principles of

the Kingdom which Christians must apply to the whole social order, though so long as paganism largely dominates the world in which Christians have to live they may find that the only course of action practically possible falls short of the complete Christian ideal—or in some situations that they must lay down their lives rather than compromise. Luke, the Gentile, with the Roman Empire and pagan civilisation in his mind, seizes upon the proclamation at Nazareth as another great theme of his Gospel. Jesus knew that such a challenge to the existing order would evoke bitter and relentless opposition (Matt. xi. 16–24). Luke xxi. 31 refers to the whole chapter and not only to the parable, which is told as an encouragement. Suffering and world-confusion such as the apocalyptic writers both experienced and predicted, and Christians in their turn had to undergo (cf. Mark xiii, probably a late Christian apocalypse, p. 263, and the apocalyptic passages Matt. xxiv; Luke xxi) prove not that God is defeated, but that He is at work, and that the signs of His Kingdom are calling forth the antagonism of those who “love darkness rather than light.” With Luke xxi. 29–33, cf. Matt. xxiv. 32–5, and note especially Luke xxi. 28.

(b) *The New Law of the Kingdom.* Legalism and literalism had obscured the true meaning of the O.T. Law (Matt. xxiii. 4, 23; Luke xi. 42, 46). Jesus accused the Scribes and Pharisees not only of transgressing the Commandment of God by their tradition (Matt. xv. 2–6; Mark vii. 9–13; see p. 149), but even of “shutting the Kingdom of God against men” (Matt. xxiii. 13) by their misinterpretation and misapplication of the Law. Yet there were still some who loved and revered the Law in the spirit of Ps. cxix and were indeed “not far from the Kingdom” (Mark xii. 34). Jesus’ teaching was altogether new, yet He frequently starts from the

old, either expanding the interpretation given by the Scribes or countering it with His own (contrast Matt. xiii. 52 and ix. 16-17. For His "authority" see pp. 21, 268).

The "SERMON ON THE MOUNT" comes from Q. Matthew treats this body of teaching as though it were given at one time. Luke distributes it, the longest passage being the "Sermon on the Plain" (Luke vi. 20-49) and omits some of the sayings altogether. Pupils should compare Matthew and Luke: e.g., in the Beatitudes (Luke vi. 20-6). Luke has "blessed are ye poor," which accords with Jesus' general teaching that the possession of riches brought dangers and temptations (Mark x. 23-4; Luke xviii. 24), whereas Matthew's "poor in spirit" makes the saying refer to the "pious" (*chasidim*) who were often also poor and oppressed or despised (cf. John vii. 49). For Matthew's phrase "Kingdom of heaven," see pp. 62, 81.

Parts of the "Sermon" reinterpret certain provisions of the Mosaic Law and implicitly correct the Law itself as well as the tradition of the rabbis (e.g. marriage and divorce, oaths, almsgiving, prayer and fasting). See O.T. references in R.V., and Gore's *Commentary*, pp. 136-8. The Beatitudes correspond in general to the "blessings" of Deut. xxviii. 3-13; for detailed expositions see Commentaries and *The Handbook of Christian Teaching*, pp. 397-406. The A.V. is Elizabethan, and some of the words do not mean now quite what they did to the translators. Thus a "comforter" is one who brings strength. The "meek" are not spiritless people, but those who are gentle and gracious, not self-assertive and over-bearing. The "pure in heart" are not those who know nothing about the evil in the world, but those who are purified and disciplined. The reference to "reward" is not a piece of prudential morality but an assertion that to live under God's

kingship is more satisfying than to escape the cost of doing so, and an assurance that God is faithful. The sayings are not abstract maxims. They deal with the actual situations in which people who serve God find themselves, and are a reply to other people who say that religion spoils life. Neither "blessed" nor "happy" is an adequate rendering of *makarios*, which means rather "it is well with." Taken together, the Beatitudes sketch the kind of people amongst whom we may find the kingdom existent and active, not living by rule but "led by the Spirit of God" (cf. Rom. viii. 14).

The sincere Pharisee's passion was to *fulfil the Law* completely, and for fear of failure he sought an authoritative ruling as to what should or should not be done in every conceivable circumstance, however trivial (see p. 148). This led to much casuistry in defining what might be done without risk of breaking the Law, or devising ways of circumventing it (e.g. "*Corban*," Matt. xv. 5, or the distinction between swearing by the altar and swearing by the gift upon it, Matt. xxiii. 18, 19). Jesus swept all this away and made it clear that at all costs and without limitation men must live as children of one Father and members of one family. Whatever in human relationships makes it harder for men to come frankly and expectantly into the presence of God must go (Matt. v. 23, 24). A man must be willing to lose a faculty (in itself good) rather than fall into perpetual misuse of it (Matt. v. 27-30: not an endorsement of asceticism but a hyperbolical way of insisting upon discipline, as verses 25-6 are upon the danger of postponing the generous, and not merely the just, settlement of obligations and disputes).

The Old Testament Law of EQUIVALENCE (v. 38-42; cf. Exod. xxi. 24; Lev. xxiv. 20; Deut. xix. 21) was an advance upon the earlier practice of unlimited vengeance or the custom by which a family or a clan could

be slain if one of its members had murdered a member of a rival group. Jesus taught that willingness to forgive and to waive one's rights, to do one's duty and to give, should far exceed the injury inflicted or the service demanded, and that love is not only to be for neighbours (i.e. according to the Law and the Jewish tradition, fellow Jews) but for all without distinction. The reason is not simply that God commands it but that this is His nature and His way of dealing with men: they are to be "sons of their Father," sharing His life and reflecting His likeness (cf. Matt. xviii. 21, 22; Luke x. 30-5; Matt. v. 48, xix. 21). "Compel" (Matt. v. 41) is (R.V. marg.) "impress"—the much-resented legal right of a Roman soldier to require a civilian to help carry his baggage and equipment for a specified distance. The "perfection" or "completeness" which God desires in His sons is a fulness of life, not a meticulous keeping of rules.

To turn Jesus' words into a new set of rigid laws or to confound particular applications with broad and universal principles is to repeat the mistake of the Scribes and Pharisees regarding the Old Law. In the course of teaching it is easy to dogmatise (e.g. about the Christian position concerning peace and war), or to run into sentimental and even unethical extravagances about property, lending and giving, legal claims and settlements, and so forth. But isolated phrases from Jesus' teaching afford no ground for this. He did not condone injustice or disregard the rights and the self-respect of either individuals, classes, or peoples. By discussing the questions raised in this part of the "Sermon," pupils will be helped to reach convictions of their own, to discover how honest Christians may differ about the application of a principle on which they are agreed, and to realise that the only standards of judgment are the revelation of God's character in

Jesus and the attitudes and actions by which Jesus gave effect to His own teaching.

The "TWO COMMANDMENTS" (Matt. xxii. 34-40; cf. Luke x. 25-8; Mark xii. 28-30) have been called unoriginal because of Deut. vi. 5; Lev. xix. 18. On this see p. 244. Jesus gave a fuller meaning to all three words, God, neighbour, and love, and revealed the truth that love of neighbours is not simply parallel to love of God but springs from it. In the N.T. love means not mere affection but the good will in action (cf. p. 274).

(c) On MIRACLES in general see pp. 21 ff. With Luke vii. 18-23; Matt. xi. 2-6, cf. Jesus' proclamation at Nazareth. Luke iv. 18-19 takes up the prophecies of Isa. xxix. 18 f., xxxv. 5 f., and lxi. 1 f. The implied warning in Luke vii. 23; Matt. xi. 6 is against allowing suspicion of Jesus' unconventional attitude to the Law, to sinners, and to nationalistic aspirations to blind people to the real evidence that He has indeed "come from God." Jesus pays tribute to John's character and to his uniqueness as the immediate forerunner of the Messiah; yet so long as John could doubt Jesus' identity, or fail to see what God was accomplishing in Him, he fell short of the humblest who found in Jesus the embodiment of the Kingdom: "he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me" (Matt. x. 40; John xiii. 20).

Matt. xi. 12 may be a later interpolation by the Evangelist when the Church was suffering persecution. More probably Jesus Himself here refers to followers of His who, still thinking of the Kingdom in terms of political emancipation, have been concerned in some zealot rising of which we have no knowledge.

The *Syllabus* note aptly sums up the rest of the chapter. Children's games ("weddings and funerals") afford the illustration in xi. 16, 17. The evangelist's

comment in xi. 19 (Luke vii. 35 has "children" instead of "works") is practically "time will show."

With Matt. xi. 25-7 cf. Luke x. 21-2, where it follows the return of the Seventy from their mission. Matthew seems to regard it as a cry of thanksgiving for those who have perceived by moral and spiritual intuition truths which are not attained by subtle reasoning and learned argument. They have received the Kingdom as little children (Matt. xviii. 3; Luke xviii. 17 *nepioi*, untaught, unskilled, as contrasted with *teleioi*, perfect or complete, advanced in understanding and knowledge; cf. Eph. vi. 13). In receiving Jesus, i.e. responding to Him in trust and love, they had received God, who sent Him (Matt. x. 40; Luke ix. 48).

In Matt. xi. 27-8 Jesus makes a claim unequalled elsewhere in the Synoptic Gospels, but there is no reason for attributing the words to anyone other than Jesus Himself. Some suppose that this saying refers to the "burden" of the Law (Matt. xxiii. 4; Luke xi. 46), but it may well have a more general reference. Jesus may have had the carpenter's making of yokes in mind: a yoke which fits does not remove or diminish the burden but takes away the galling and the strain: again a yoke lightens the burden by sharing it.

(d) For PARABLES see p. 28. Children love these stories but to teach them literalistically or with some pat, conventional interpretation is to defeat their purpose (cf. *Syllabus*, note). Pupils should be stimulated to think out and discuss the real point of each as telling us something about the Kingdom.

GROWTH. Mustard seed stood for the apparently insignificant. The height of the mature plant is about twice that of a man. Matthew and Luke (xiii. 19) exaggerate this to "tree" and "branches." Of leaven the point is hiddenness rather than minuteness—perhaps also the ferment and bubbling with which it works.

The tares (Matt. xiii. 24-30, only) afforded an answer to the perennial problem of the existence and prosperity of the wicked in God's world: the explanation in xiii. 36-43 was most likely a later moralising addition to Jesus' own teaching, for instead of stressing the certainty that evil must necessarily perish from the lives of men and from society when the sovereignty of God is fully accepted, it lays all the emphasis upon eschatology—the "last things." The parable itself is not about the end of the world, as the "explanation" may cause pupils to suppose.

INGATHERING. Luke xv may be spoiled as easily by taking it too much for granted as by attempting to embroider upon it. The stories were told to the "publicans and sinners," and also to the Pharisees who despised or condemned them. The central thought is that God not only values them as He does the orthodox and unadventurously good, but seeks them out—the bewildered, the unwitting, and the deliberate (Balmforth, "Clarendon Bible," *Luke*, p. 236). The misery of being out of the way and the necessity that the deliberate sinner should repent are not ignored, but "throughout this chapter there runs a rising note of joy." Judaism and Pharisaism dwelt on God's mercy towards the repentant but Jewish scholars themselves recognise how far beyond this Jesus went in this portrayal of God and in His own mission. Luke's universalism may be the reason why, unlike the Judaistic Matthew (xxii. 11-15), he does not include in his version of the Wedding Feast the reference to the man without a wedding garment. The Drag-net (Matt. xiii. 47-50 only) touches the same point as the Tares, but is given an eschatological twist.

John makes little use of the phrase "Kingdom of God," and has, strictly speaking, no parables, but a wealth of allegory. iv. 19-24 is neither. Its force, like

that of the Synoptic story of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 33), is apparent when the long history of antagonism between Jew and Samaritan, kindred by blood and religious tradition is recalled (see pp. 129 *f.*): "this mountain"—i.e. Gerizim. R.V. marg., "God is Spirit," is the better rendering: He is personal but He is also infinite. True worship depends not upon the place but upon a right understanding of the Being and Nature of God. By "Salvation is of the Jews" Jesus meant that God had revealed Himself in the history and religion of the Jews, which were a preparation for the full and final truth that He was now making manifest. John x. 16 is not out of accordance with the Synoptic limitation of Jesus' mission to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. x. 6, xv. 24), and Luke records many instances of His care for Gentiles. Strategically, because they had been prepared, the Jews came first, but even in the post-exilic prophetic tradition (pp. 120) they were to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles."

OBEDIENCE, LOYALTY AND WATCHFULNESS. Luke's parable of the pounds (xix. 11-27) and Matthew's of the talents (Matt. xxv. 14-30) differ, but both stress responsibility for the effective use of God's gifts. The elaboration of detail and the horrific ending are not to be pressed, though Jesus did definitely teach that incalculable loss is a natural and inevitable outcome of wasting or misusing what God bestows and rejecting the Kingdom of God. Note in Luke x. 25-37 that it is the lawyer (i.e. Scribe) who, in putting Jesus to the test ("tempting" Him), himself sums up religion as love of God and neighbour, but Jesus' startling answer to his question is that traditional enemies are in fact neighbours, and may show themselves such by their actions, whereas the people from whom such actions might be expected, in view of the special hereditary relationship to God which they claimed, actually failed

even their own fellow-countryman. In Matt. xxv. 1-30 the stories concern foresight, faithfulness, and the consequences of failure in both, as also of over-caution and pusillanimity ("I was afraid"): to do nothing for fear of doing wrong is as sinful as careless neglect. xxi. 28-32 contrasts saying and doing. Luke xii. 35-48 is not simply a warning about the end of the world, but a word for every day. R.V. for "servant" has bondsman: the illustration does not condone chattel-slavery, but means that men have no claims against the grace of God, and that gratitude does not absolve them from doing their duty. xiii. 6-9 concerns God's grace and patience and has nothing to do with the incident of Matt. xxi. 19 ff.; Mark xi. 13, 20-1, though it may recall Isa. v. 1-7.

THE KINGDOM AS A QUEST. The incomparable worth of the Kingdom is the real theme of Matt. xiii. 44-6, and this whether a man lights upon it unexpectedly or finds it in process of a long quest. The form of the stories is no argument for spiritual covetousness or selfishness. What the Kingdom brings, indeed, cannot be kept unless it is shared. Yet however much a man gives up for the Kingdom he is only the more assured of everything vital to his welfare in the truest sense (Luke xii. 31; Matt. vi. 33 says "and His righteousness": cf. Peter's question and Jesus' hyperbolic reply, Matt. xix. 27-9). But this is not to be regarded as a kind of insurance. The quest involves effort and sacrifice, regardless of the cost, and sustained by faith (Matt. x. 37-8).

C. The Passion and Resurrection.

For PETER'S CONFESSION see p. 37. "Son of the living God," in Matthew's account, is a significant appeal and challenge to Jews from Jewish Christians. "On this rock" has been ceaselessly discussed, but sometimes

too superficially—e.g. in Greek, Peter is *petros* and rock is *petra*, but nothing can be deduced from this since in Aramaic, the language used by Jesus, there is no distinction. For the figure cf. Isa. xxviii. 16. Abraham was called the rock on which Israel was founded. The Roman Catholic view is that in these words Jesus conferred primacy and special authority upon Peter as an individual: "Before His Passion Jesus Christ promised to St. Peter the Primacy over the Church" (Cardinal Gasparri, *The Catholic Catechism*, 127, footnote): hence "By divine right the Roman Pontiff has over the Church a primacy not only of honour but of jurisdiction, and this both in things concerning faith and morals and in discipline and government" (*ibid.*, 130). The Protestant view is that Jesus spoke of the faith which was in Peter and is essential in all who would be of Christ's company and cause. In either case it remains true that Jesus could build no living community capable of sharing His life and carrying on His work till He was assured of such whole-hearted response to His Lordship. On this recognition that He was sent of God to redeem God's people and establish God's Kingdom He could and did build. What Peter dared to say, the others clearly felt, and to the Twelve in due time was given the commission to make disciples of all men.

The word CHURCH (*ekklesia*, the Septuagint equivalent in Greek for the Hebrew "congregation" of Israel) occurs in the Gospels only here and in Matt. xviii. 17, and some scholars think this passage must relate to an incident after the Resurrection. But it may here mean the special "synagogue," or group, which accepted Jesus' teaching. Ultimately of course it means the new Israel, the whole company of Christ's faithful people (cf. p. 185), against whom the "powers of Hades" (Moffatt: cf. Smith and Goodspeed's translation, "the

powers of death") i.e. evil and destructive forces, cannot prevail. The Rabbis spoke of binding and loosing in the sense of forbidding and permitting. The "POWER OF THE KEYS" has been variously interpreted as that of admitting to the Church or excluding from it, of declaring the sense in which the Faith is to be held, or of pronouncing or refusing absolution. It is safe to say that essentially it means the guidance of the whole Church into all truth and into the way of living according to the mind of Christ, through whatever representative body or person that guidance is expressed. For discussions see Green, "Clarendon Bible," *Matthew*, pp. 202-3 and Newton Flew, *Jesus and His Church* (Epworth Press, 6s.), pp. 130-3.

PETER'S PROTEST was natural, since the Jews had so long looked for a Messiah to deliver them from their humiliation and suffering. Jesus now declared that, deliberately rejected by the Jews, He must Himself suffer a death abhorred by Jew and Gentile alike (cf. p. 267) and further implied ("Satan" = adversary) that Peter's insistence recalled the very temptation which He had conquered at the beginning of His ministry. Nor was it true only of the Messiah that in order to save He must suffer, as the "Servant Songs" had said (cf. p. 125): so also must His followers. "Life" and "soul" here are renderings of one Greek word (*psyche*), and the Aramaic behind this is best translated "self." But Jesus looks beyond death. Matt. xvi. 27 has an eschatological colouring, and means that God, who rules all things, will vindicate the Sufferer, as His resurrection will show. xvi. 28 adds the assurance that this will become, for some of the Twelve at any rate, an experienced fact and thus infinitely more than the belief or hope of Isa. liii. 10-12. They remembered after His death that He had spoken of His resurrection, but they forgot the inwardness of both until, after the

event, He taught them again (Luke xxiv. 5-9, 21; Acts i. 3-5).

Events leading to the Cross. Crowds turn quickly from enthusiasm to fanatical antagonism. This happened more than once in Jesus' ministry (cf. Luke iv. 18-30; John vi. 14-15). In Matt. xxii. 23-33 the Sadducees use a typical debating point as a trap to discredit Jesus as a teacher, in the eyes of the people, and to involve Him in controversy with their own opponents, the Pharisees. "Moses said"—cf. Deut. xxv. 5: in early Hebrew history the hope of every man was to ensure the continuance of his family line, since his immortality lay not in personal survival of death but in remembrance by posterity. Jesus exposed the insincerity of the Sadducees by fastening at once on the main issue and pointing to a truth which no Jew, whatever his party or school of theology, could deny. For THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE see p. 47. While the Sadducees maintained magnificent ritual which stirred the deepest devotional feelings of pious Jews from all over the world, their money-making by profiteering in the sale of animals and birds for sacrifice and in the exchange of foreign money for the coinage required by the Law for offerings was an open scandal, and the commercialised atmosphere of the outer courts was fatal to reverence. The quotation is from Isa. lvi. 7. Matt. xxvi. 61 is a perversion of what Jesus actually said (cf. John ii. 19-21). The HERODIANS come less into the story than the Pharisees and Sadducees. The warning in Luke xiii. 31 was possibly due to kindly feeling on the part of some Pharisees mingled with antagonism to this party of Jews, whose policy was "political compromise at the expense of religious principle." Green ("Clarendon Bible," *Matthew*, p. 119) suggests that the third of Jesus' temptations in the wilderness was to do as the Herodians did. Possibly they were the informers

against Jesus in Mark iii. 1-6: they appear again in conspiracy with the Pharisees (Mark xii. 13). Herod the Great and his successors played a double game in religion as well as in politics (see p. 154). Jesus' words suggest that He thought Antipas had something to do with this hint to depart.

The "council" of John xi. 47 was the Sanhedrin. The Pharisees regarded Jesus as a blasphemer and were concerned for traditional religion. The Sadducees thought Him a fanatic and feared for "the prestige of the institution" with which their fortunes were bound up, for popular disturbance might mean drastic Roman intervention. Caiaphas' advice is worldly-wise—destroy Jesus and the risk of trouble leading to suppression of the national existence will be removed. But, as the evangelist observes, there was a deeper significance in Caiaphas' words than Caiaphas was capable of appreciating. The vicarious suffering and death of Jesus were redemptive (see p. 38; cf. Mark x. 45; Matt. xx. 28).

John xii. 9-19 says plainly that THE RAISING OF LAZARUS (not mentioned by the Synoptists) rekindled popular enthusiasm for Jesus. Such a resurgence would intensify the fears of Sadducees, Pharisees and Herodians alike, stimulating them to immediate action. For the triumphal entry see p. 46. Here again the writer points to the testimony which Jesus' antagonists were forced, despite themselves, to bear.

The dramatic episode of the Greek proselytes occasioned (John xii. 20) THE SELF-REVELATION OF JESUS, and His words about the meaning which the approaching crisis had for Him. xii. 27 does not express a desire to escape, any more than Luke xxii. 42 (Mark xiv. 36; Matt. xxvi. 39) does. Jesus alone understood the horror of the sin which those who should finally reject Him and put Him to death would commit, and the responsibility

for carrying on His mission which would rest upon His still unstable followers. There might still be hope of a change of heart on the part of His antagonists. But if not (Matt. xxvi. 42) He was certain that the purpose of God would be fulfilled even through the suffering which men's sin, not God's ordinance, made inevitable (John xii. 28, xviii. 11). The coincidence of the thunder may have been paralleled at the Baptism (Mark i. 11; Matt. iii. 17; Luke iii. 22). Jesus simply bids those who thought they actually heard the audible voice of God pay heed to what God is indeed saying to *them*, whether miraculously or otherwise. "Judgment" is *krisis*, the moment when good and evil are clearly discerned and decision must be made. "The prince of this world" is the spirit that refuses to respond to the truth, power and sovereignty of God (cf. John xiv. 30).

PILATE was responsible to Rome for preserving order in a difficult area. Religion concerned him only as far as it affected civil administration. To secure Jesus' death the Jews must bring about His condemnation by Pilate and they chose a charge which Pilate could not ignore though, as a result of his private examination of Jesus, he believed it false. Pilate did his best to find a way out but lacked courage. He had already been reprimanded at Rome for failing to control or pacify Jewish malcontents and his final effort was to avoid both flouting the priests and passing the death sentence on Jesus. Mark xv. 11 says specifically that the priests invited the multitude to demand Barabbas: John xix. 15 puts the final word of hypocrisy and almost of blasphemy against Jewish tradition into their mouths.

John xviii. 28, xix. 14 differs from Mark xv. 42, but is probably right. The DAY OF PREPARATION was that before the Feast day, and a day ran from sunset to sunset. According to John, Jesus' death took place at the hour in the afternoon when the paschal lambs were

being sacrificed in readiness to be eaten in the evening after sunset—i.e. on the next day.

The Crucifixion. (a) Luke xxiii. 34 must refer either to the soldiers, who were merely carrying out orders, or to those ultimately responsible, but still blind to Jesus' relationship to His Father. "The rulers" were the members of the Sanhedrin. "Paradise" (garden) came from Persian into Greek and was the equivalent of "heaven" or "Abraham's bosom," meaning the presence of God.

(b) The word rendered "finished" means "completed, made perfect," from the same root as "be ye perfect" in Matt. v. 48 (cf. pp. 171, 245).

(c) R.V. marg., "a son of God," is accurate. See p. 64.

The Resurrection. (a) Each of the Gospels states definitely, though in varying terms, that "they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus" (Luke xxiv. 3), but John xx. 5-8 makes Peter and (it is believed) the Apostle John the witnesses, the Synoptics recording the experience of the women, and being based upon Mark. Matt. xxviii. 9-10 adds that on leaving the tomb "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary" met the risen Lord, who greeted them and sent them to tell the disciples. Two quite INDEPENDENT TRADITIONS thus affirm that the resurrection of Jesus was of His whole person and not simply of His spirit. Speculation ON THE MODE OF THE RESURRECTION is futile. The choice really lies between believing that the material body of Jesus was transformed into a spiritual body, or that it was instantaneously dispersed and replaced by another suited to the conditions of personal existence in the life beyond death. Pupils should read 1 Cor. xv. 35-58 in connection with the Gospel resurrection stories. On discrepancies between the narratives see pp. 65 f., 253 f.

The emptiness of the tomb would not have created the Christian Church out of a group of disillusioned and sorrowful people: they would have tended to throw the accusation of theft back upon the priests and the soldiers (Matt. xxvii. 62-6). The TRANSFORMATION OF THE DISCIPLES can be accounted for only by their certainty that Jesus "showed Himself alive after His passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days" (Acts i. 3): this turned them into a body of missionaries whom nothing could stop from proclaiming their good news (Acts x. 40-2).

(b) and (c). Whatever the nature of Jesus' body AFTER THE RESURRECTION, it transcended physical limitations. John xx. 20, 24-31 represents Jesus as offering marks of identification. But one special purpose of the Fourth Gospel was to combat the heresy of the Docetic Gnostics, who, in their anxiety to safeguard the truth of Jesus' divinity, explained away the reality of His humanity. The vital point in the appearance stories is that the Apostles and other witnesses were sure beyond all possibility of doubt that the Jesus whom they had known before His death had afterwards manifested Himself to them in person and talked with them. These experiences were in no sense the product of imagination or "wishful thinking." They came unexpectedly, when all hope had been abandoned, and there was never, after the "forty days," any doubt that the appearances had ceased, or any confusion of subsequent "visions and revelations of the Lord" (2 Cor. xii. 1-5) with these appearances, which had now accomplished their purpose. That was why Paul insisted that his experience on the Damascus road ("out of due time," 1 Cor. xv. 8) was to be reckoned with those of the other Apostles before Pentecost.

John recounts appearances in Jerusalem while Matthew tells of appearances in Galilee. But again

discrepancies of this kind are intelligible, not suspicious. The commission in John xx. 21 is the equivalent of Matt. xxviii. 18-19, and the gift of the Spirit is the necessary endowment. Jesus' symbolical act (John xx. 22) is, as an act, akin to the feet-washing (John xiii. 3-17) though more profoundly significant. It takes up the words He had spoken at the Last Supper (John xv. 5, 16, xvii. 18, 19, 21). The POWER TO FORGIVE SINS or to "retain" is given to the disciples as a body possessing the spirit of Jesus Christ. It is a responsibility rather than an authority. "In virtue of the liberty from sin which the disciples of Jesus have found in His fellowship, they become the channels of that same liberating power." (Wright, *Mission and Message of Jesus*, p. 940.) If they fail to communicate it the sins of others may still be "retained." The authority to pronounce absolution to those who are penitent vested in clergy of episcopal churches is that of chosen and appointed *ministers*, i.e. individuals who represent and act for the whole Church as the body of Christ, and the Church *declares* the forgiveness which God freely bestows (cf. p. 278). The essence of the relationship which should prevail amongst Christians is in the injunction "Confess your sins one to another and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (James v. 16). With John xx. 23 cf. the words of Jesus to Peter (Matt. xvi. 19, p. 176).

(d) The "GREAT COMMISSION," whether Jesus spoke in these precise terms or not, sums up what the disciples and the early Church knew to be the purpose of God and the meaning of Jesus' own mission. Jesus went primarily to His own people, but for the sake of the whole world (see p. 173). BAPTISM, the mark of repentance, cleansing, and the outpouring of the Spirit of God, was the sign of admission to membership of the Christian community, the new Israel, under the

new Covenant, as it had been associated with the admission of Gentiles to the Jewish community. For "the name" as meaning the life of the person who bore it see p. 74: whether the preposition means "in" or "into" (J. A. Findlay, art. *Religion in Education*, October, 1939) the idea was familiar: inscriptions show that soldiers took the oath (*sacramentum*) "into the name" or possession of the most high Zeus, and money was paid "into the name" or possession of someone (cf. Green, "Clarendon Bible," *Matthew*, p. 258). The TRINITARIAN FORMULA (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) appears not to have been in use till some considerable time after the Ascension and Pentecost. But from the first Christians proclaimed Jesus as Lord (i.e. divine, pp. 15, 251) and the Spirit as the self-impartment of God through Jesus (Acts ii. 32-6). The continued presence of Christ with and in His people (Acts xxiii. 11; Col. i. 27) was an experience, not a theological or mystical theory. Acts narrates the concrete fulfilment of all that these verses affirm.

III. THE UNIVERSAL GOSPEL IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Acts (see p. 67), "the Gospel of the Holy Spirit," has two keynotes, "power" and "witness" (i. 8), and can be divided into three parts, corresponding with "Jerusalem" (i.-viii. 3), "Judæa and Samaria" (viii. 4-40, ix. 32-xi. 18), and "to the ends of the earth" (xi. 19-xxviii. 31). For variety of sources see p. 68, and for Luke's own travel-diary and his connection with Antioch p. 195. For books see p. 68.

A. Pentecost.

The Ascension. Luke xxiv. 51 is expanded in Acts i. 9-11, but neither is a first-hand description. Matthew and John say nothing, and Mark xvi. 19 comes from

later tradition (see p. 65). Some MSS of Luke xxiv. 51 read only "He parted from them" (R.V. marg.). For the cloud as symbolising the Divine presence see Lev. xvi. 2; Exod. xxiv. 15-18. For the conception of "carried up" and "taken up" see p. 68: cf. also pp. 52, 181, 275.

The disciples still cherished thoughts of the Kingdom of God as temporal and political (Mark ix. 34, x. 37-40; Luke xxiv. 21). Jesus, recalling its true nature, emphasised their privilege and responsibility (Acts i. 3-8), and now, when His appearances to them ceased, they did not again lose heart and fall away as they had done after the Crucifixion, but waited in prayerful expectation (Acts i. 4, 14), though they scarcely knew what to look for.

The Coming of the Spirit. Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks, Lev. xxiii. 15-21), "is among the Jews the festival of the giving of the Law, and Rabbinical tradition held that the Law was proclaimed on Sinai in the seventy languages of mankind, though only Israel hearkened and obeyed. So the new Law is proclaimed to all mankind in words which they can understand" (Dodd, in *A Companion to the Bible*, p. 391). Whatever "tongues" meant (see p. 71) the first effect of the spiritual energising of the disciples was that the Gospel was proclaimed to people from all parts of the world (Acts ii. 9-10; cf. Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts i. 8), though as yet no missionaries were sent out by the Church in Jerusalem. PETER'S ADDRESS summarises the Christian message or *Kerygma* (ii. 22-4, 32-6, 38-9; cf. x. 36-43); it presents the kernel of the Apostolic preaching (see pp. 10, 265). For "Jesus is Lord," cf. pp. 9 f., 251. "Christ" here is still a descriptive title equivalent to Messiah, Anointed One. It was only later used as part of the name Jesus Christ. Peter's argument from the Psalms was typical of his time, though Pss. xvi, cx and

Joel ii. 28-32 were not specific predictions, but imaginative pictures of what would happen when God put forth His power.

In one sense Mark iii. 14 records the beginning of THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, but since by those words we mean the whole body of those who believe the Gospel which the Apostles preached, the community created and sustained by the Holy Spirit, Pentecost was "the birthday of the Church." ii. 42 is a picture of its earliest life. All was simple, spontaneous and joyous (ii. 44-7, see pp. 73, 258).

B. Stephen: The Parting of the Ways.

See *Syllabus* notes. The Jews practised LAYING ON OF HANDS (vi. 6) in the ministry of healing and in the acceptance of new Rabbis. Here it marked the commissioning of members, chosen because they were "full of the Spirit and of wisdom," to act for the whole Church and therein to be transmitters of the Spirit by which the Church lives, and not mere managers of business. STEPHEN spoke to men for whom the O.T. Scriptures were supreme and final, but ungoverned fanaticism prevailed. Stephen's triumphant witness may have shaken SAUL's confident antagonism, as a Pharisee, to the Christian heresy by making him wonder whether, after all, Jesus could and did give the inner peace with God which he was vainly seeking through his efforts to keep the Law perfectly (see p. 188).

The victorious manifestation of the Spirit of Jesus in Stephen fortified the Christians and intensified the malevolence of their antagonists (Acts viii. 1), with the result that the Gospel was carried further afield. For the word "Church" (*ekklesia*), see p. 175. "At first the Christians were a community within Judaism, not external to it. They had a 'way of salvation' and a method of living which distinguished them from other

Jews" (Lake and Cadbury, *Beginnings of Christianity*, IV, i, p. 53). Jerusalem remained the centre of this community, despite the persecution (Acts viii. 4, ix. 26-8, xi. 1-3).

Saul sought relief for stirrings of conscience in fiercer activity against the indomitable followers of "the Way" (Acts viii. 3, xxvi. 11). PHILIP illustrates the serenity and strength of Christians under persecution. Samaria may have been chosen because of Acts i. 8: next to the Jews themselves the Samaritans, by reason of their religious tradition, might seem likeliest to respond to the Gospel (John iv. 12, 25).

The leaders of the early Church acted in faith upon what Jesus had said about HEALING, mental and physical (Matt. x. 1-8; Luke ix. 6, x. 9; Acts v. 16). Those who exercised this power (not all possessed it: 1 Cor. xii. 9, 30) said that Christ wrought through them (Acts iii. 12-16). The patient must have faith—not merely belief that healing would come, but self-committal to Jesus as Lord (Acts iii. 16, xiv. 9): healing was an outcome of new life in Christ (p. 25). But the world was full of faith-healing cults and of those who exploited them. SIMON MAGUS is an example of the latter: what to the Christians were "signs" of right relationship to God (Acts viii. 6), were to the superstitious multitudes just marvels, and to the practiser of magic a superior achievement in his own trade, worth paying for. Though converted and baptised Simon was blind to the real nature of Christian "miracle," and still loved power and money (Acts viii. 13, 18-19). His sin was a form of blasphemy as well as an attempt to commercialise God's gifts and ministries.

Note that the Apostles, in CONFIRMING those who had been baptised, *prayed* for them that they might receive the fulness of the Spirit: the laying on of hands was symbolic and sacramental (cf. the breathing of Jesus

upon the disciples, John xx. 22), as in the ordination of deacons, when again it followed prayer (Acts vi. 6). Whatever interpretation is given to the rite in any part of the Christian Church nothing mechanical or magical is implied. Pupils so often run away with superficial and false ideas, and consequently misinterpret Confirmation, Ordination, and Holy Communion, just as they say that the Apostles went down to Samaria to "give" the Holy Spirit. Of course God alone can do that, though He may do so through human ministry.

The ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH was either a "God-fearer" (one who attended the Synagogue and sympathised with Jewish teaching but had taken no steps towards formal acceptance of Judaism; cf. pp. 195) or less probably a proselyte. Note that R.V. transfers viii. 37 to marg.; viii. 33 is obscure even to scholars. Of viii. 39-40 Findlay (*Acts*, p. 101) remarks, "We should say that Philip fell into a walking trance, and found himself at Azotus (the O.T. Ashdod) when he came out of it."

Peter's experience with CORNELIUS turned the scale in the subsequent discussion at Jerusalem of Paul's insistence upon complete Christian fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile converts (Acts xi and xv; cf. p. 193). Cornelius was a "God-fearer" (Acts x. 2; cf. the other centurion of Luke vii. 1-6: Luke was quick to note instances of Gentile readiness to listen to the Gospel). The coincident visions of Cornelius and Peter illustrate God's providence and guidance through moments of insight and inward promptings, as real now as then. Peter's dream betrays a conflict, perhaps unconscious, which may have been set up by the criticisms or apprehensions of Jewish fellow-Christians regarding the results of admitting Gentiles to the fellowship (x. 28). From the first the command of Christ concerning the Gentiles was obeyed (Matt. xxviii. 19;

Acts i. 8). But to preach to Gentiles was one thing; to eat with them and thus incur ceremonial defilement was quite another (Acts xi. 3). Paul finally won the victory for freedom and community by showing that individuals related in the same way to Christ must be on terms of equality and fellowship with each other (1 Cor. xii. 13; Col. iii. 11).

C. The Appeal to the Gentiles.

This section of the *Syllabus* is intentionally stripped of detail so that pupils may see clearly (*a*) the sweep of the story; (*b*) the figure of Paul as a heroic missionary; (*c*) the appeal of the universal Gospel to men of widely differing types, circumstances and beliefs; (*d*) the steady thrust of the Christian mission towards Rome. Many touches in these chapters light up the historical, political and social background against which the Church developed: reference to commentaries will bring out the richness and realism of Luke's picture; correlation with other parts of the school curriculum (especially history, geography and classics) is here particularly fruitful.

(*a*) *Saul the persecutor and his conversion* (see p. 239). TARSUS had become one of the most important towns in the Eastern Mediterranean and there Saul would have gained insight into Greek culture—possibly at the University, though more probably he was educated at a Jewish school before going to Jerusalem for training as a rabbi (cf. p. 149). But as a member of a Jewish community in such surroundings his patriotism and religious zeal would be intensified and he became almost fanatical in his Pharisaic passion for the Law, for orthodoxy, and for personal righteousness. Gamaliel (v. 34, xxii. 3) followed the more tolerant Hillel rather than the rigidly traditionalist Shammai. Saul, however, threw himself with desperate eagerness into the

campaign against the Christians, thinking thus to serve God more perfectly. Possibly he was a member of the Sanhedrin; there is no evidence.

The Christians at DAMASCUS (men of "the Way," ix. 2) were probably refugees from Jerusalem (viii. 1), still subject to trial by the High Priest if he could lay hold of them (xxii. 5). The three accounts of Saul's vision (ix. 3-8, xxii. 6-12, xxvi. 13) should be compared (cf. p. 181). For a good note on the conversion see Anderson Scott, *St. Paul*, pp. 11 f. Saul was in a state of mental and spiritual tension due to his self-despair (cf. Rom. vii. 7-25) and increasing doubt whether Christ was not after all the Messiah. He was liable to emotional storm and stress, though intellectually so vigorous. Whatever the causes of the dazzling light and the sound (cf. John xii. 29), he was vividly aware of a spiritual crisis in which he could no longer resist the appeal and claim of Christ, whose Spirit had been so manifest in Stephen (Acts vi. 15, xxii. 20) and was so evidently animating the "saints" whom he, Saul, was hounding down (Acts xxvi. 10). Like most "sudden" conversions his was the outcome of a long process. In this sense it can be psychologically explained, as his temporary blindness can, but it was no purely subjective experience. But, whatever the precise nature of his vision (cf. p. 206), Saul knew now that Jesus Christ was living and personal (Acts xxiii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 12 where "know" means "have come to know fully"). But he always distinguished this experience of Christ on the road to Damascus from all his other relationships with Him (2 Cor. xii. 1-10). His commission was clear (Acts xxvi. 16-18; in ix. 15-16, xxii. 15 put into the mouth of Ananias, and in xxii. 17-21, ascribed to a subsequent experience—perhaps confirmatory of the first—in the Temple at Jerusalem). It was apostolic (1 Cor. ix. 1) as that of the others had been (Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts i.

8). His early life in Tarsus had shown him the need of the Gentiles, but he began his mission in Damascus, as everywhere subsequently, with the Jews (Acts ix. 20, 22).

(b) *Paul at Antioch and in Asia Minor.* Paul was soon attacked by the Jews as he had previously attacked the Christians (Acts ix. 13-25), and to the end he was subject to similar plots (Acts xxiii. 12-14). The suspicion of Christians in Jerusalem was natural enough (cf. Acts ix. 13, 14). BARNABAS was not only his sponsor and his travelling companion on his first missionary journey, but an active colleague in the mission (Acts ix. 27, xi. 22-4, 30, xiii. 2, etc.).

ANTIOCH, capital of the Roman province of Syria, was the third city in the Roman Empire. Notorious for quasi-religious superstition and profligacy, it was also the home of a large Jewish colony, with many proselytes, an important fact for the spread of Christianity. Acts xi. 19 refers to the persecution of viii. 1, and xi. 19-20 indicates controversy between conservative and liberal, Judaising and Hellenising, interpretations of Christianity (cf. p. 133) especially with regard to the inclusion of Gentiles, which had already troubled Peter (x. 9-16). But the "men of Cyprus and Cyrene" were perhaps proselytes who had become Christians and took a wider view (cf. Mark xv. 21; Acts ii. 10, vi. 9). Luke was conceivably one of them (cf. p. 158). Not only were the disciples first called Christians there, but Luke's phrase about the local church may mean that it was the first in which Christians were no longer considered a sect or "synagogue" of the Jews. (Lake and Cadbury: *Beginnings of Christianity*, IV, i, pp. 54, 128.) Barnabas knew the effectiveness of Paul's work with Jews at Damascus (ix. 22) and Hellenist Jews at Jerusalem (ix. 29). While Paul was at Tarsus after Jewish plots had driven him from Jerusalem (ix. 30)

he may have been disowned by his family and friends (Phil. iii. 8; Findlay, *Acts*, p. 106). Like all Jewish boys, he had learnt a trade (in his case tent-making), but had no need to use it till, as a Christian, he would not even seem to preach the Gospel for gain (p. 201-3).

The *Syllabus* indicates the salient points concerning Paul's journeys. Luke's theme is the spread of the Gospel (i. 8) and he shows (i) how the impulse of the Spirit drove Paul ever further out along the highways of the world; (ii) how the message about Jesus appealed to people of different circumstances and outlook; (iii) how the Gospel reached Rome, the strategic centre of the world, Government officials at every stage either voluntarily declaring or being constrained to admit that Christianity is not subversive of law and order. The geography, properly handled, is of interest (cf. Pope: *On the Road with St. Paul*, Epworth Press, 4s. 6d.), but attention should be directed primarily to Luke's sketches of pagan and Christian life. Paul's letters (Anderson Scott's *St. Paul* has all the relevant passages set out in chronological order) throw much light on this.

"Prophets" in the Church were preachers; "teachers" were appointed to instruct members of the Church and candidates in the story of Jesus and in His teaching—Q was probably a teachers' manual (cf. pp. 10, 15).

"John" in xiii. 5 is John Mark, writer of the Gospel. "Sorcerer" here represents *magos*, rendered "wise men" in Matt. ii. 1: the verb is used of Simon in viii. 9, 11. Jews had a reputation for astrology, soothsaying, exorcism, magic and the like, and Paul had constantly to deal with this kind of thing (xvi. 16-33, xix. 13-17). "Saul, also called Paul": many Jews had also Gentile names (e.g. John Mark, Jesus Justus); Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, might well be called by his Roman name in his journeys through the Empire and might wish to emphasise the transformation of "Saul of

Tarsus"—known to all Jews and Christians as arch-persecutor of the Church.

Paul loyally preached "TO THE JEW FIRST," but his success among the Gentiles roused jealous hatred in the Jews, who dogged him from city to city and stirred up against him people of influence, Gentiles, and fickle crowds (xiii. 50, xiv. 2, 19). Rejection by such Jews reinforced his mission to the Gentiles (xiii. 46-8) though it intensified his longing to win his own people (Rom. ix. 1-5, x. 1-4, xi; cf. p. 198 on the Beroean Jews).

Most scholars now hold that *Galatians* was written to the churches which Paul founded on his first journey, i.e. dwellers in SOUTH GALATIA: for arguments *pro* and *con* see Findlay, pp. 165*f*. The South Galatian Gentiles were grossly pagan, though they had been influenced by Greek and Roman conceptions of the gods (xiv. 8-13). Paul's address to the Lystrians (xiv. 14-18) has something in common with his speech to the more sophisticated Athenians (xvii. 22-31). His address to the Jews at Antioch of Pisidia recalls Peter's at Pentecost (ii. 14-36) and Stephen's, which Paul had heard, but the note of his own experience is unmistakable (xiii. 38-9). Findlay (*Acts*, p. 136) notes "the heroism of the Apostle who went to Derbe to bring the good news, with bandaged head and broken body, when scarcely recovered from a bout of acute malaria!"

GALATIANS is now widely believed to be the first of Paul's letters, and possibly the earliest document in the N.T., written in A.D. 48-49 on his way from Antioch to discuss at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts xv. 1-2) the critical question of the status and obligations of uncircumcised Gentile converts. If so, it is easier to reconcile Acts xi. 1-18, xv. 1-29 and Gal. i. 15-ii. 14. Gal. ii. 7-10 probably refers to the occasions mentioned in Acts xi. 1-18, 27-30.

There has been much controversy as to whether

Acts xv is in substance a duplicate of Acts xi, whether Galatians was written before or after it, what is the precise meaning of the "Decrees," and so on. The significance of the COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM (Acts xv. 1-29) is clear. After having been criticised and hindered by Judaizing Christians, who contended that Gentiles must become technically Jews, by circumcision and observance of the Law in matters of ceremonial purity, before they could enter into full fellowship (including eating and drinking) with the Christian Church, Paul obtained a considered judgment from the mother-church at Jerusalem. This declared circumcision unnecessary but laid down conditions involving either moral principles or respect for the consciences of fellow-Christians. Chastity and fidelity in marriage belonged to both the Christian and the Jewish witness in a world where morality and religion were regarded as separable (cf. p. 200). Meat bought in the markets might have been sacrificed to idols, and some thought that to eat it was to give pagan gods entrance to their bodies and souls (cf. Paul's advice in 1 Cor. viii. 1-ix. 22, and Rom. xiv, and note that "all things to all men" does not mean laxity, but denying oneself anything that would make others less responsive to one's preaching of Christ). "Things strangled"—Jews drained the blood from slain animals before eating the flesh because "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. vii. 26, xvii. 10); Gentile Christians who disregarded this might drive scrupulous Jewish Christians away from table-fellowship with them. "Blood" may simply mean the taking of life. If the Western Text is right in omitting "things strangled" from xv. 20, 29 and xxi. 25, the "Decrees" ordained no food-laws but simply enjoined the observance of what we now consider elementary morality (Findlay, *Acts*, p. 141), though then the demand was less obviously a part of religion.

Paul stood firmly for freedom from Jewish legalism but absolute obedience to the Spirit of Jesus and consideration for the moral welfare of other, even weaker, people (see Gal. i. 6-9, v. 1-7, 13-14, and other passages). Peter vacillated though in the end he effectively maintained his own real conviction and supported Paul (Gal. ii. 11-14; Acts xv. 7-11). Henceforth the Gentile Christian must be accepted as freely as the Jewish: the Gospel was universal (Gal. iii. 28; Col. iii. 11). The danger lest Christianity should become nothing more than a higher form of Judaism was averted (cf. pp. 175, 190, 251).

Leadership had passed from Barnabas to Paul, whose initiative appears in xv. 36 *ff.* Barnabas may have been less uncompromising than Paul concerning the position of Gentile Christians (Gal. ii. 13). SILAS (perhaps the Silvanus of 1 and 2 Thess. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 19), though influential at Jerusalem (xv. 22) leaves little impression on the story. For TIMOTHY Paul evidently had personal affection, as Barnabas may have had for John Mark. Presumably he was among Paul's earlier converts at Lystra and Iconium and might be expected to appeal to his Gentile fellow-countrymen, but unless he was circumcised the Jews to whom they preached might refuse to listen to him on the ground that technically he was illegitimate. Paul's concession to Jewish prejudice, however, created trouble later (Acts xxi. 17 *ff.*; Gal. v. 2-4, 11).

The Roman provinces of "Asia" and Bithynia seemed obviously, from the geographical standpoint, the next to open up. Paul found all roads closed save that which led north-west. He saw indications of the Divine purpose in varied experiences—vision and dreams, inward conviction, the advice of friends, external circumstances. Talk with a native of Macedonia or with someone (perhaps Luke) who had recently been there

may account for the dream. Upon Paul's response to the call hung the expansion of Christianity to the West rather than to the East. His great project of carrying the Gospel first to Rome (Acts xix. 21, xxiii. 11) and then to the western confines of the empire (Rom. xv. 24, 28; cf. Acts i. 8) gradually unfolded in his mind.

From TROAS (Homer's Troy) to Philippi he was accompanied by Luke: "they" abruptly becomes "we" in xvi. 10, but from xvi. 19 the "we" disappears until Paul reaches Philippi again on his return journey (xx. 5), when it emerges once more and continues till his arrival at Jerusalem (xxi. 18): it comes in again from his departure from Cæsarea (xxvii. 1) and remains till he finally arrives in Rome (xxviii. 16). These "we-passages" mark the incorporation into Luke's narrative of a travel diary which scholars believe to be Luke's own. A "we" verse at xi. 27 in the Western Text, even if not original, is evidence of the second century belief that Luke belonged to Antioch (Lake and Cadbury, IV, p. 130).

At PHILIPPI many veterans of the Roman army were settled after the victory of Antony and Octavian over Brutus and Cassius at Actium in 42 B.C. Upon citizens of such a colony were conferred many of the rights enjoyed by the citizens of Rome itself (hence Paul's analogy in Phil. iii. 20). The "ambassadors of Christ" thus came for the first time into direct contact with a complete expression of the Roman political and social order. Paul appealed to Roman law and Roman citizenship (note the plural in xvi. 37) to prevent forcible termination of the mission. Luke notes the first of the testimonies by responsible Roman officials which he so carefully records as evidence that Christianity was not obnoxious to the State (cf. Luke xxiii. 14 and Rom. xiii. 4).

LYDIA seems to have been, like Cornelius, a "God-fearer" (p. 187) and the "place of prayer" either a

synagogue or a place of meeting in the open air. Philippi offers an illustration of the CHURCH IN A HOUSE typical of Christianity at this stage (cf. the house of John Mark's mother in Jerusalem, Acts i. 13, xii. 12) and inevitable if Christians were driven out of the synagogues (see further Acts ii. 46, A.V.; Col. iv. 15; Philem. 2). Paul's LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS shows (e.g. i. 3-9) that this church was particularly marked by harmony within itself and loyalty to him. Usually thought to have been written during Paul's captivity at Rome, Philippians is now believed by some scholars to have been sent during his long stay at Ephesus (perhaps from prison) when the Philippians had sent him money and a new helper, Epaphras (Epaphroditus). Cf. pp. 202, 211.

The Christian message undermined superstition and was incompatible with dishonesty, exploitation and greed of gain. As again later, this led to the attacks upon Paul at Philippi (Acts xvi. 16; cf. xix. 19, 25-7). His persecutors appealed to the prætors (R.V. marg.—Luke is exact in using the local title) on a false but plausible charge of offence against Roman law, which permitted the practice of certain religions (*religiones licitæ*), including the Jewish, but not proselytisation of Romans or the establishment of all sorts of new cults. "This was probably the cause of persecution of the Christians, who in the eyes of the Roman law were at the best Jews engaged in illegal proselytism" (Lake and Cadbury, IV, p. 195). PAGAN SUPERSTITION and Jewish exorcism of a sort akin to magic (p. 191; cf. Mark ix. 28; Luke xi. 18; Acts xix. 13-17) are manifest here. Pytho was the prophetess of Apollo, slayer of the dragon Python, and this kind of ventriloquist divination, or "fortune-telling," with fits of frenzy, was widespread. Note the popular belief in "the most high God" and in a "way of salvation," which, however, had no

ethical and spiritual quality (cf. Lystra, Acts xiv. 11-18, and Athens, xvii. 16-31). Men everywhere wanted to find a "way" (usually ceremonial, or the performance of "mysteries") by which they might be delivered from the fear of evil and the shadow of death. But Christians had found real deliverance (Luke i. 77-9) and Paul very directly "spoke to the condition" either of crowds, as at Lystra and Athens, or of individuals like the Philippian gaoler. Earthquakes were frequent in the region of Philippi but the magistrates' superstitious dread of natural, if terrifying, phenomena illustrates the pagan mind in contrast with Paul's calm assurance that God's wise providence orders all creation (cf. the shipwreck and viper stories, Acts xxvii. 21-6, xxviii. 3-5). On miracles in general see pp. 21 ff., 29 ff., and for special notes, Blunt, *Acts*, pp. 35-7 and Findlay, *Acts*, pp. 34-9. For the binding and scourging of a Roman citizen see p. 267.

At THESSALONICA Jewish antagonists again instigated mob-violence by false charges and hypocritical appeals to imperial loyalty (xiv. 2, 19, xvii. 13; cf. xvi. 19-21), but, as elsewhere, Paul was acquitted. "Politarchs" were the non-Roman magistrates—another evidence of Luke's accuracy. "Those that have turned the world upside down"—in modern phrase, "these Bolsheviks" (Lake and Cadbury).

1 THESSALONIANS was written after Paul had gone on to Athens and received from Silvanus and Timothy a report of the situation at Thessalonica. If 2 Thessalonians is genuine, it was written first, and 1 Thessalonians corrected misapprehensions of Paul's teaching about the Second Coming of Christ (which at that time he still expected in the near future); if Christians died before the second Advent they would not be outside the Kingdom, and it behoved all Christians not to neglect their daily work and depend on charity so that

they might spend all their time in pious preparation—"if any will not work, neither shall he eat." In later epistles Paul seems to have relinquished the expectation of a Second Advent within measurable time and to be more concerned with that spiritual fellowship with Christ which is the true guarantee of "eternal life."

The reference to the BERCEAN JEWs shows that, despite Acts xiii. 46, Paul still went "to the Jew first" (Rom. ii. 9-11), affirming that Messianic prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus (Acts ix. 20, 22, xiii. 32-4), and that many Jews were responsive (xvii. 11).

At Athens Paul encountered Greek culture, dominated by philosophy and the spirit of enquiry, and at Corinth the corruption of Greek civilisation hastened by cosmopolitanism and commercialisation. He tried to meet the first on its own ground: failure sent him to the second with the uncompromising challenge of the Cross and the good news of redemption. 1 Cor. ii. 1-2 reflects his experience at Athens and is the keynote of his missionary message.

Even in Athens Paul went first to the Jews, but in the *Agora*, or market-place, was "a forest of statues," and there also was the *Stoa Poikile*, or porch where Zeno had taught and whence the "Stoic philosophers" took their name. Altars to "the unknown gods" commemorated sacrifices offered by the half-mythical Epimenides of Crete when he was called in to bring the Athenians relief from a great pestilence. Paul quotes his poem on the death of Zeus (cf. Titus i. 12): "They carved a tomb for thee, O holiest, most High, the Cretans, always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies! But thou dost not die, but livest for ever, for in thee we live and move and have our being." Aratus, from whom Paul quotes, "For we also are His offspring," perhaps came from Cilicia and perhaps from Tarsus (Findlay, pp. 159-60). Paul saw in the Athenians' idolatry a vague desire for religious

satisfaction which neither current philosophies nor the many mystery-religions fulfilled. "Both Stoics and Epicureans held a materialist view of the universe . . . the Stoics held that 'life according to nature' was the ideal of conduct, and the Epicureans made happiness their goal"; the Stoics believed in a "world-soul" and had a conception of "spirit"; but "there was little practical difference between them" (Lake and Cadbury). The intelligentsia, on the look-out for "the last new idea," called Paul *spermologos*—babbler, picker-up-of-second-hand-notions. The suspicious note in "He seems to be an announcer of foreign deities," recalls the fatal charge against Socrates. The Areopagus was both the Council, which was supreme in local affairs and had special authority in matters of religion and education, and the place ("Mars' Hill") where it met. Paul, as a man of education, began with "natural theology," just as his approach to Jews was from the Old Testament Scriptures; in His appointed "man" the God hitherto unknown to intelligent and religiously minded pagans had declared Himself. But he was stopped before he could get to his Gospel. The first Christians affirmed that the power of the risen Christ accounted for *their* new life, and then went on to tell the story of *His* life, death and resurrection. Jews stumbled at the thought of a crucified Messiah: Greeks, as here, "jeered" at the very mention of resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. i. 23-4) because for them immortality meant merely the release at death of a soul or spirit imprisoned in the body, and not the survival of the complete personality. The Athenians, interpreting resurrection crudely as "the resuscitation of corpses," considered it "foolishness." (1 Cor. xv. 35-58 sets forth Paul's real conception.) A few, both Jews and Greeks, responded to the preaching of Christ as "the power and wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i. 24). But Athens was the one great

city where, apparently, Paul established no church. Paul found that in the civilised world at large "not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble have part in" the Christian calling (1 Cor. i. 26, R.V. marg.). As in Galilee, so in the Empire, the earliest followers of Jesus were mostly humble folk.

At CORINTH Paul came up against the other side of the ancient world. What religion there was had no connection with morality; the inseparability of the two when both are real had subsequently to be taught even to the members of the Church at Corinth (1 Cor. v. 1-8). The word *korinthiazesthai*, "to live as a Corinthian," was used elsewhere to express cynical licence in conduct. Acts says little about Paul's stay, but Acts and Epistles *must* be read together, at any rate by the teacher, in order to appreciate the full vividness of Paul's life and work. 1 and 2 Corinthians depict a mission and a church against a background of pagan self-indulgence, just as Rom. i. 18-32 paints a dark but true picture of moral conditions in the Roman Empire as Paul knew it.

Corinth, the Suez of the ancient world, became in A.D. 44 the seat of a Roman proconsul. Gallio was a brother of Seneca, the Stoic philosopher and tutor of Nero (Tacitus, *Ann.*, xvi. 17). An inscription at Delphi which shows that Gallio's proconsulship of Achaia must have begun in A.D. 51 is important for Pauline chronology. Gallio did not allow his judgment to be deflected (Acts xviii. 17): Paul was guiltless so far as law and order were concerned.

Here again Paul was forced to turn from the Jews (xviii. 5-7), but with great recompense: Priscilla (i.e. Prisca, Rom. xvi. 3) and Aquila may have become Christians at Rome, perhaps as freedmen, inheriting citizenship from ancestors who had originally been Jewish slaves (cf. p. 152). The famous edict of Claudius

(Suetonius, *Claud.* 25) is one of the very few references to Christianity in first-century classical literature, and says that he expelled Jews who caused disturbance at the instigation of "Chrēstus." On Paul's working at his trade cf. p. 191, and cf. 1 Cor. iv. 12, ix. 6-18. Because notoriously there was among both Jews and Gentiles so much exploitation of religion for gain, it was important for Paul to prove beyond question that the Gospel was "without charge," even if complete freedom to give time and strength to preaching it sometimes necessitated his accepting gifts from churches which pressed them upon him (2 Cor. i. 11, xi. 7-9; Phil. iv. 10-19; Acts xx. 32-5). All the time he was raising money to give to the impoverished Christians at Jerusalem (1 Cor. xvi. 1-4; 2 Cor. ix). He laid emphasis upon this "collection" as a token of unity between the Jewish and Gentile elements in the Church, a matter very near his heart (Rom. xv. 26; 2 Cor. viii; cf. Acts xxiv. 17). His vision (xviii. 9) no doubt came, as others did (Acts xvi. 9, xxiii. 11, xxvii. 23-4; 2 Cor. xii. 1), when he was in stress of mind if not bodily peril.

The later story of the church in Corinth throws much light on the character and vicissitudes of the early Christian Church in general, but it emerges only in Paul's letters to the Corinthians (p. 204). Apparently Gallio's judgment gave Paul firmer foothold in Corinth, for he was not compelled to leave forthwith (Acts xviii. 18). He anticipated danger on his return to Syria, for men took a Nazirite vow (not to cut their hair again till the enterprise was completed) before setting off on a perilous journey. He appears to have terminated his journey at Antioch though he may also have visited Jerusalem (xviii. 22; "went up"), and from Antioch he started his third journey as he had his first.

EPHESUS, capital of the important and populous Roman province of Asia, was very Hellenistic but also

addicted to crass spiritualism and sorcery (xix. 13-19). "Artemis of the Ephesians" (xix. 34-5) was not the Greek goddess but the pagan goddess of fertility. Her temple was one of the wonders of the world—fragments now in the British Museum indicate its immense size—and was the centre of the cult for "all Asia and the inhabited earth" (xix. 27). At the time of Paul's stay (A.D. 53-6) the city was disturbed and ill-governed, for the proconsul, Junius Silenus, had been murdered in 54 and the "proconsuls" of xix. 38 were two ruffianly usurpers. This anarchy increased Paul's danger, for his Roman citizenship would protect him less than it ought to have done against pagan mob-violence stirred up by the silversmiths (xix. 23-40). It is believed that Priscilla and Aquila were under suspicion for having made Silenus their patron, and that they risked their lives in seeking Paul's safety (Rom. xvi. 4). Duncan and others maintain that Paul was twice imprisoned at Ephesus and wrote the "Epistles of the Captivity" (p. 211) then. He certainly wrote 1 Corinthians and part of 2 Corinthians there (p. 204) and 1 Cor. xv. 32 (cf. 2 Cor. i. 8-10) may mean either that he narrowly escaped death in the arena, or simply that his antagonists in Ephesus were like beasts in their fury.

The church in Ephesus became the third great centre of Christian influence after Jerusalem and Antioch. Tradition says that the Apostle John spent his last years there and the Fourth Gospel was probably written there (p. 158). The affection of the Ephesian Christians for Paul indicates great faith and loyalty and Paul's speech describes the building up of a church (Acts xx. 17-38). The churches of the Lycus valley (Laodicea, Colossæ and Hierapolis) seem to have been founded under his influence, though not by him (p. 267), while he was at Ephesus, as may have been the Seven Churches of Rev. i. 11 (cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 19).

APOLLOS represented the Hellenistic Jewish type of culture and religion so strong at Alexandria, where later a distinctive school of Christian thought was to grow up (p. 151). Acts xviii. 24-8 continues the story of the church at Corinth, now rent by sectarian disputes (1 Cor. i. 12) and touches on the debt of Apollos to Paul, through Priscilla and Aquila. John the Baptist's disciples (Luke xi. 1) had multiplied, apparently without recognising that Jesus, about whom they knew, was the Messiah heralded by John (cf. Luke vii. 19, ix. 7, 19). Acts xviii. 26 implies either that Apollos' knowledge was accurate as far as it went, or that he did not fully understand the significance of the facts. After his mission to Corinth he returned to Ephesus, where he preferred to remain (1 Cor. xvi. 12).

The ignorance of the "twelve men" at Ephesus (Acts xix. 1-7) is difficult to explain. "John's Baptism was one of Repentance and Hope. . . . Christian Baptism was of Repentance and Faith; it declared that the Messiah had come, and gave His name; and it called men into a fellowship of believers in Him, as the 'way' in which the Messianic salvation could actually be enjoyed" (Blunt, *Acts*, p. 224). Cf. Acts ix. 17-19 for Paul's own experience and viii. 14-17 for that of Philip's Samaritan converts.

Presumably Paul preached in Tyrannus' lecture-hall during the middle of the day, when it was too hot to work at his trade. The "sweat-cloths and aprons" had no magical properties but might aid the faith of some sick folk (cf. p. 35). "Miracles," i.e. *dunameis*: in Rom. xv. 18-19; 2 Cor. xii. 12 Paul speaks of what the power of Christ wrought through him by "signs" as well as in speech, but, as here in verse 10, the emphasis is on "fully preaching the Gospel." The envious magic-workers and exorcists (Acts viii. 9-14, xvi. 16-18) did not scruple to use the name of Jesus (cf. Mark ix. 38 ff.;

Luke ix. 49 *ff.*), with repercussions on themselves similar to what sometimes happens to African witch-doctors or "spiritualists" in our own country who exploit psychological forces which they do not understand. The whole story emphasises the difference between apostolic healing in the spirit and power of Christ and superstitious, money-making pagan pretensions to work "miracles."

Paul was charged with weakness and vacillation because he had to change his plans (2 Cor. i. 15-18; Acts xix. 21-2, xx. 1-16). But (Acts xx. 17-35) he made full use of the "great door and effectual" in Ephesus, despite the "many adversaries" (1 Cor. xvi. 8-9). The bishops (*episkopoi*, overseers) were local officers of individual churches (perhaps even "churches in houses," xx. 20), and are clearly the same as the "elders" (*presbuteroi*) of xx. 17 (cf. xi. 30, xv. 2). We do not hear of "monarchical bishops" (i.e. each supervising a whole district) before Ignatius of Antioch, two generations later. Paul's "preaching the Kingdom" is reminiscent of the Gospels, and the words he attributes to Jesus are recorded nowhere else.

The riot brought the opposition to a climax, and showed that if Paul had appealed to the Roman Courts he would probably have been vindicated (xix. 38-41). As it was, the Asiarchs (xix. 31), "local officials of the imperial religion in which the late emperor was worshipped" (Findlay), made friendly efforts to save him from attack.

In 1 AND 2 CORINTHIANS four letters are distinguishable. Paul refers to the first, written from Ephesus, in 1 Cor. v. 9-13, and 2 Cor. vi. 14-vii. 1 is very likely part of it. The Corinthian Christians wrote asking various questions (1 Cor. vii. 1) and at the same time Paul heard of their sectarian disputes (1 Cor. i. 11). 1 Corinthians deals with both. Paul then paid a flying

visit to Corinth (2 Cor. xiii. 1), but, meeting with recalcitrance and attacks upon his authority and personal integrity, he returned to Ephesus and wrote the "severe" letter (2 Cor. ii. 3-4, vii. 8-12, xiii. 10) of which 2 Cor. x-xiii is probably part, sending it to Corinth by Titus. He awaited a reply, first at Troas and then in Macedonia, whence he wrote 2 Cor. i-ix in relief and joy at the reconciliation achieved (2 Cor. vii. 5-7).

ROMANS was written during Paul's three months in Greece after leaving Ephesus (Acts xx. 1-3), as an earnest of his intention (Acts xix. 21) to visit Rome. His knowledge of the church there came doubtless from Priscilla and Aquila (p. 200). The letter is his explanation of the Gospel in relation to Judaism (many of the Christians at Rome were Jewish: cf. p. 152) and in its power to meet the needs of a pagan world. It is the most systematic of his writings. (The best exposition is Dodd's, in the *Moffatt Commentary*.)

Luke apparently joined Paul again at Philippi (see p. 195). Possibly EUTYCHUS only unconscious (Acts xx. 10). Of greater interest is the reference (xx. 7) to the "BREAKING OF BREAD," which seems to have included both the *Agapé* (p. 73) and the Eucharist, and was at night, not in the morning.

The Jerusalem Church, always very Jewish in tradition, was naturally the centre for Jewish Christians everywhere (Acts xxi. 20: R.V. marg., "myriads"—Findlay, "ever so many"). Again Paul sought to do all that, in loyalty to conscience, he could to allay prejudice and suspicion and to promote unity in Christ (1 Cor. ix. 19-23). In Acts xxi. 25 "the brethren" seem to fortify their suggestion by recalling the agreement established by the "Decrees" (Acts xv. 19-21) so that there might be no misunderstanding on either side. It was a recognised act of piety to help poorer Jews to

fulfil their vows (in this case probably Nazirite, cf. p. 93).

D. From Jerusalem to Rome.

All the old charges were brought against Paul by the fanatical Jews who added the unfounded one of defiling the Temple by taking a Gentile into the inner courts—an offence punishable by death even for a Roman citizen. Claudius Lysias was tribune of a cohort of 600 men stationed, to prevent disorder, in the Tower of Antonia ("the castle") which overlooked and communicated with the Temple. Paul evidently spoke Greek with an educated accent, for *koiné* Greek (in which the N.T. was written) was the common language of the empire: Aramaic (Acts xxi. 40—"Hebrew") also was understood in many countries. Josephus tells of the Egyptian revolutionary here mentioned, and (*Antiquities*, xx. 8) describes the "assassins," or *sicarii*, dagger-men, a Jewish sect which arose in Felix's time, as "a kind of secret society for the purpose of patriotic assassination" (Blunt, p. 236), mingling with the crowds in the Temple and then using their concealed weapons.

Paul's SPEECH FROM THE STEPS should be compared with Acts ix. 1-20 (p. 189) and with xxvi. 2-23, though neither report is likely to be verbatim. Paul met his accusers on their own ground, declaring that as a zealous and well-brought-up Jew he had gone even further than they in opposing this "Way" (cf. Phil. iii. 4-6) and that after his overwhelming vision it was another loyal Jew, Ananias, who showed him that Jesus was indeed the Messiah of Jewish expectation. But, he said, he was directly commissioned by the Lord, the Messiah, Himself, in repeated visions (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 1-2, xv. 8; 2 Cor. xii. 1-5. Note that in Acts ix. 4-8, xxii. 6-11, xxvi. 14 a voice is mentioned, but in Acts xxii.

17-20, of Paul's "trance" in the Temple, the words are "and *saw* Him saying unto me"). Each time he was told to go to the Gentiles, but this (ix. 15; cf. Rom. ix-xii) was the mission laid upon Israel by the Prophets (see p. 120). The fanatics broke in before he could say that everywhere he had gone first to the Jews (cf. xxvi. 20). The separatism intensified, with the best of intentions, by Nehemiah and Ezra (p. 129) reached its climax in the rejection of Paul for preaching a universal Gospel.

Deceived by Paul's appearance (Acts xxii. 28 implies "What? You?") Lysias was inclined to be harsh in fulfilling his duty. "Examine" (Acts xxii. 29) means "under the lash." His fear of the consequences (cf. Acts xvi. 38-9) made him conceal the facts in his letter to Felix (Acts xxiii. 26-30). He brought PAUL BEFORE THE COUNCIL partly as a gesture and partly to obtain an official reason for getting out of his own difficulty and sending Paul to Felix. Ananias, a political Sadducee of the worst kind, was made High Priest, and later deposed, by Agrippa II, finally being assassinated by dagger-men. Professing to rebuke blasphemy, he actually broke the Law. Paul respected the High Priestly office but did not withdraw his condemnation of the man. Whether he deliberately raised discord in the Sanhedrin or not (Acts xxiii. 6) his main purpose was to rebut the charge of subverting the authority of Moses among the dispersed Jews and to prove that his teaching was in accordance with Jewish teaching about the coming of a Messiah and about resurrection as inseparable from this. Pharisees (e.g. Nicodemus, Gamaliel) had always been more responsive than Sadducees to the teaching of Jesus and to the message of the Apostles: cf. Acts iv. 1-2, v. 17, 34.

The uproar in the Sanhedrin and news of the plot (Acts xxiii. 12 *f.*) would increase Lysias' dread of

censure for not preventing unlawful assembly and riot. Hence his anxiety to get Paul safely away to Cæsarea, the seat of the Proconsul.

FELIX is unfavourably described by Tacitus (*Ann.*, xii. 54). Made Procurator of Judæa in A.D. 54, he was recalled four or five years later by Nero (Acts xxiv. 27) on the petition of the Jews, who were oppressed by his use of force and frequent crucifixions and scandalised by his immorality (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities*, xx. 8). Drusilla (Acts xxiv. 24), Bernice, and Herod Agrippa II (Acts xxv. 23) were children of Herod Agrippa I (Acts xii. 1).

The professional advocate TERTULLUS adroitly tried to throw the whole blame for prevailing Jewish unrest upon Paul and the "sect" (*hairesis*, the root of our word heresy). Paul, refuting Tertullus on points of fact and law (Acts xxiv. 19), repeated his positive claim: neither an instigator of political unrest nor a subverter of true Judaism, he is a preacher of the Way which fulfils the Law and the Prophets. There was a recognised reason for his visit to Jerusalem, since the gathering and distribution of charitable funds was one of the admitted functions of the various "associations," religious or other, tolerated by Rome.

Felix may have gained his "more exact knowledge" (Acts xxiv. 22) from Drusilla. But an alternative and better rendering is "having noted carefully what was said." He perceived that there was no "true bill" against Paul, but wished to avoid conflict with the Jewish leaders. Luke records not only another Roman vindication of Paul but also that Paul's preaching could touch the conscience of such Romans as Felix.

FESTUS, sent in A.D. 57 to set the province in order, was conciliatory, but not at the expense of justice or wisdom. Paul, knowing the malevolence of his traducers, was firm and fearless, finally using his right of appeal

to Cæsar as a means of circumventing once and for all the plots of the Jews, securing complete vindication, and reaching Rome (Acts xix. 21). "Power" (Acts xxv. 5) means authority, and "Council" (xxv. 12) is here not the Sanhedrin but Festus' advisers.

AGRIPPA II and his sister Bernice were of shady reputation, but their ceremonial visit could be turned to account. Agrippa was not asked to try Paul, but, with his special knowledge of Jewish religion and customs, to assist the Procurator in preparing the necessary report for the courts at Rome. Paul was again pronounced innocent in the eye of Roman law (Acts xxv. 25). "Lord," in xxv. 26, is *kurios*, the Greek equivalent for *dominus*, the title by which Caligula and succeeding emperors were called. Later the Christians were persecuted because, declaring that "Jesus is Lord" (*kurios*), they would not give Cæsar also the divine title (pp. 15, 251, 261).

PAUL'S SPEECH BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA is less a defence than a powerful presentation of the Gospel as he had experienced it. "To kick against the goad" (Acts xxvi. 14) is not a Hebrew but a Greek and Latin proverb (e.g. in Pindar and Aeschylus, as "done in a corner" is a phrase used by Plato). It brings out the struggle against growing conviction which preceded Paul's conversion (p. 189). This time he preaches the Resurrection as something to which he could bear personal witness (cf. Acts xxvi. 16-21 with i. 8, 21-2, ii. 22-4, 32, iv. 33, x. 33-43, and with 1 Cor. xv. 8). Agrippa, as a Jew and temporal head of the Jewish religion, refused to be drawn into an admission that Paul was right, and Paul accepted his sarcastic evasion with sorrowful dignity: Festus was frankly baffled by a religious discourse, which to him was all nonsense. Nevertheless, Roman Procurator and Jewish King agree (as Pilate and Herod did in the case of Jesus)

that Paul was "guiltless of any crime but wrong-headedness."

PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME (Acts xxvii. 1-xxviii. 15) remains one of the great dramatic stories of ancient literature, true to fact, for it is a "we-passage." Commentaries illuminate details, but the great thing is the simply drawn picture of Paul, a prisoner, but the most commanding figure in every situation, filled with courage and quiet assurance born of faith (Acts xxvii. 23-4). "Whose I am and whom I serve" explains everything. Paul exhibits humour, self-forgetfulness, sang-froid and sound judgment, no less than devotion and missionary zeal, but all are products of this vital religion (Acts xxvii. 25).

The final picture of PAUL IN ROME (Acts xxviii. 16-31) is hardly the climax to be expected after so stirring a story. Why was the trial delayed, and how did it end? Did he ever reach Spain (Rom. xv. 24, 28)? Tradition leaves little doubt that in the end he was martyred at Rome. But so, the legends say, was Peter. Was not the manner of their deaths as significant as that of Stephen's? Acts is indeed a magnificent portrait-gallery of Christ's soldiers and saints. But Luke's purpose in writing it was to show why and how the Universal Gospel was carried into the whole world (Acts i. 8; cf. p. 191). So we are left with this quietly triumphant fact that for two years the Apostle to the Gentiles, though "an ambassador in a chain" (Eph. vi. 20), had freedom to "preach the Kingdom of God" and teach "the Way" in Rome, the centre of world-government and civilisation. That may be why so little reference is made to his relations with the Church in Rome, and only enough is said about the Jews there to indicate that Paul, as always, gave them their chance of hailing Jesus as Messiah and Lord (Acts xxviii. 17-25: the "one word" was the prophecy of Isa. vi. 9-10)

but, in cold blood as it were, they re-enacted at Rome the Jewish tragedy of Jerusalem. And so—to the Gentiles! The Gospel of Christ must be for all nations: “they also will hear.”

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, the “Epistles of the Captivity,” were long believed to have been written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome. Some scholars now substitute Ephesus for Rome (p. 202). This may be true of PHILIPPIANS (see p. 196). COLOSSIANS was more probably written from Rome (for a note see p. 267). With it the messenger took the personal note to PHILEMON which is a perfect illustration of Christian courtesy, tact, and good feeling: for reasons why Paul did not denounce slavery see Commentaries. From certain MSS. of EPHESIANS the words “in Ephesus” are missing, and it is supposed that this was a circular letter of which copies were sent to several churches with the appropriate name inserted in each case. Another view (dating from the second century) is that Ephesians is the “lost” letter to Laodicea mentioned in Col. iv. 16. The similarity of Ephesians to Colossians has led some scholars to doubt the genuineness of Ephesians. But it has a distinctiveness of its own and in particular sets forth (see p. 276) with deep insight the corporate nature of the Church in its relationship to Christ. The best recent account of St. Paul’s letters is by Prof. T. W. Manson, *A Companion to the Bible*, pp. 100–13.

THE THIRD AND FOURTH YEARS' WORK

THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Personal and Corporate Religion

As already observed (p. 15), the third and fourth years in the Senior Course must not be regarded merely as "more of the same kind of thing" that has been dealt with in the first and second years. It is true that there is a return to many of the same persons, incidents and even passages found in the 11 +, 12 + *Syllabus*, and there is no departure from the concrete. But we are now concerned to a greater extent with certain great general (not abstract) ideas about life and religion in history, and with the actual outworking of these in our own experience as individuals and as members of a community or communities. If the work in the first two years has been well done the references at this stage to incidents and passages then studied will suffice to recall, quickly and clearly, essential fact and relevant background, so that boys and girls will respond readily to the proposal to look a little more deeply into the lives of the pioneers and to think a little further about the nature of the great movements with which they were concerned. The material which in the third and fourth years is added to that already used in the first and second is not there for the sole purpose of having something new to teach and keeping interest alive. It is intended to bring out more fully the meaning of the facts with which the pupils should by this time be well acquainted. No good teacher is likely to need the reminder that nothing in the way

of moralising or preaching is here suggested or implied.

Perhaps the chief difference between the purpose and treatment of this part of the *Syllabus* and those of the preceding part may be indicated in this way: if during the first two years in the Senior Course we have been making, as it were, a series of vivid water-colour sketches, in the subsequent two we shall be dealing with the same subject but by means of fairly strong though not unduly detailed etchings.

It was necessary to comment in considerable detail on the passages selected for the 11+ and 12+ years because, even if pupils were not ready at that stage for so much information, the teacher needed it in order that he might teach with the clearness and simplicity that spring from fullness of knowledge. This, however, leaves us now free to concentrate on points specially relevant to the purpose of the *Syllabus* for the 13+ and 14+ years, relying upon teachers to turn back to the earlier sections for much that is of use in the following ones.

THIRD YEAR: 13+

I. THE OLD COVENANT

(1) *The Call of Abraham, the Father of the Race*

ABRAHAM himself illustrates the twofold conception upon which the introduction to this part of the *Syllabus* (pp. 67 *f.*) dwells. But though we may regard him as a real man (p. 77) and not as a tribe personified, he was essentially a tribal man. At this stage of Hebrew development and for nearly fifteen hundred years afterwards (i.e. until the Exile) the individual owed his significance, in social life and in religion, to his membership of his tribe or people, whether his position in it were high or humble. So Abraham's migration

from Ur, under an impulse which he recognised as more religious than economic or romantic, was far more than an individual adventure. The ambitious man of Abraham's race and time dreamed of founding a new tribe or clan. This is evident enough in the Genesis picture of Abraham himself. But for Abraham all the future was bound up in his relationship with his God (Gen. xii. 2-3, xvii. 4, xxii. 18). Faith and obedience were the great characteristics of his religion (Gen. xii. 1, xxii. 18), but the story of the SACRIFICE OF ISAAC reveals something further. That a man must give his best in order to secure the favour of his God was a belief common enough among pagan tribes, and as we know (p. 101) child-sacrifice was practised by the Canaanites and later by the Hebrews (it was revived by the apostate Kings of Israel and Judah—cf. Mic. vi. 7-8). To Abraham was given new and nobler insight. The story marks his break, in this respect, with paganism, and his power to judge which of his inner promptings was more truly the voice of God. And the relationship between Abraham and God was mutual, a matter of COVENANT, originating with God (contrast Jacob's vow, Gen. xxviii. 20) but resting upon the characters and acts of persons, as Nature-religions of myth and ritual could never do. Since Abraham was tribal man, and not a mere isolated individual, what was established with him was established with his kindred and descendants (Gen. xvii. 7). The Hebrews had no conception of immortality for many centuries after Abraham and so the "Everlasting Covenant" implied an enduring people and a homeland (Gen. xvii. 7-8).

(2) *Moses the Lawgiver*

MOSES was far more than this title suggests (cf. p. 79). He led the people out of captivity; as a prophet

he declared to them the name and nature of God more fully than they had hitherto known these; and because God was a God not only of power but of righteousness, Moses linked morality with religion in a way which made Hebrew religion unique among all religions before Christianity. The Covenant that God made with Abraham was confirmed with Moses and its moral demands brought out more fully. Moses stood in Hebrew tradition for Law in this sense, and in course of time much that developed long after his day was attributed to him, just as the writing of the Pentateuch, the "Books of the Law" in the Hebrew Bible, was attributed to him. Really "THE LAW" was a gradual growth during many centuries. Exod. xxi-xxiii is known as "the book of the Covenant," because quite clearly it is not only an early complete "code" embodied in Exodus, but also basic to the more fully wrought out system which we have in Deuteronomy, the book found in the Temple and read aloud by command of Josiah in 621 B.C. (Deut. v-ix. 7, x. 12-xi, xii-xxvi, xxviii).

Wheeler Robinson dates Exod. xxi-xxiii in the time of the earlier monarchy (Saul or David), five hundred years after Moses, and shows how it includes (i) *Torah*, the "word" or decision on a specific case or situation pronounced by Moses in the wilderness or later by the priests; (ii) *Mishpat*, a sentence passed by a judge. Both became precedents or customary rules and finally "law" as a recognised principle of procedure. In the Book of the Covenant we have a collection of early laws, "viz., ceremonial and moral 'words' and civil and criminal 'judgments.'" (*The Old Testament, its Making and Meaning*, pp. 162-71. Cf. Wardle's account of the Codes in "The Clarendon Bible," O.T., Vol. I.)

It is important that pupils should grasp this so that they may understand that the religion of Moses and

the Prophets, even on its "legalistic" side, was not due to the moral dictatorship of an individual, whether Moses or any other, but to some generations of corporate growth in the understanding of God and insight into the way of life that must follow. THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT represents the life and problems of a people settled in Canaan, not those of tribes wandering in the desert or waiting at the foot of Sinai. When the Israelites entered Canaan, Babylonian influence was strong there and the Israelites, no doubt, shaping their Law to some extent on the model of the civilisation they found there, as they were already tending to allow their religion to be adulterated with pagan worship (Exod. xxiii. 32-3), quite probably incorporated some of the provisions made by Hammurabi, the great King of Babylon in the twentieth century B.C. Translations of Hammurabi's Code, which was discovered in 1901 (see p. 84: Caiger, *Bible and Spade*, pp. 87-92), can be bought for a few pence. Comparison of the "Mosaic" laws with those of Hammurabi shows a great advance by the Hebrews, as in the case of Exod. xxi. 24-5, where the point is "an eye for an eye," etc., *but no more*—strict justice, not revenge.

Exod. xxi-xxiii, then, indicates what were the moral conditions, as seen about ten centuries before Christ, on which the Covenant between Yahweh and his people was to be maintained. Quite probably, even at that time, the "Book of the Covenant" was still a somewhat heterogeneous collection of oracles and precedents which the priests kept for reference—"rather a private manual than a public code." It should be noticed that the book ends with a series of blessings and a warning, which sustain its character as a *covenant* book rather than a mere series of legal enactments.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS are given in Deut. v. 6-21

in essentially the same form as in Exod. xx, though with one or two modifications. Pupils should compare the two versions, and contrast them with the "Ten Words" of Exod. xxxiv. 10-26, which are probably much nearer to the time of Moses. Many scholars regard the "Ten Commandments" as more closely connected with the Prophetic religion of the eighth century B.C., though, as the "Ten Words" show, there is a core of moral and ritual observance which comes perhaps from the "Tables" of Sinai (Exod. xxxi. 18; cf. p. 84).

When in the House of Commons in 1876 it was officially declared that the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostle's Creed were not to be regarded as sectarian and could be taught within the requirements of the Cowper-Temple Clause (a decision which still holds), the Ten Commandments were generally considered to be the most practical contribution of the Old Testament to New Testament religion. It is good that we should know them, even by heart, and nothing has made them invalid. But we must teach them for what they were, a negative statement of a moral code which springs from the two great positive commandments of the Old Testament, found in Deut. vi. 4-5; Lev. xix. 18. Jesus brought these together and gave them new meaning when He revealed God as not only a righteous Ruler, but also Father (Mark xii. 28-34; cf. pp. 52, 170).

(3) *Organisation of National Life*

The story has been sketched in the first senior year (see pp. 86 ff.). For pupils in that year great men and their achievements were naturally given prominence. Here the inwardness of it all must be touched upon. THE CONQUEST was more than a military and political feat. In any case the thrust of virile tribes in a new

and prosperous country against the older inhabitants, rival invaders and domineering world powers would increasingly express itself in a tendency to become one nation, and in the demand for security and independence. But tribes with the same religion, the same moral code, and the same history of emancipation and conquest would cohere the more quickly and strongly, sharing one great obligation and purpose. They had been led out of Egypt to worship God (Exod. x. 3, 7, 8, xiii. 8, 9). He had established a unique covenant with them, and the setting up of a unified kingdom was a means to the more adequate keeping of the Covenant, without let or hindrance. David was a man of the Covenant (2 Sam. xxiii. 5), and as such he represented, as well as ruled, his people (2 Sam. vii. 21-6).

(4) *The Worship of the One God of Israel*

Chronicles is the last book in the Hebrew Old Testament, and was apparently written between 300 and 250 B.C. The chronicler retells history with a perpetual moral. To this end he exaggerates and idealises the tradition of the golden time under David and Solomon. These passages, however, have a sincerity and almost a sublimity which are convincing. They are great literature conveying a noble religious feeling. Both David and Solomon regard the Covenant relationship of the people with God as the rock on which all else must be built (1 Chron. xxviii. 2, 8-10; 1 Kings viii. 23). The details of THE TEMPLE structure were of interest to Jews of a time when ecclesiastical influence had grown very strong. The great emphasis, however, is on the beauty and fitness of the Temple architecture, fabric and ornament. All must be of the best, and it was not the mere gift of an opulent king to his people: it was a corporate effort (1 Chron. xxix. 9), and the

work as well as the gifts had the character of worship (cf. the lovely phrase about artisans in Ecclus. xxxviii. 34: "But they will maintain the fabric of the world; and in the handywork of their craft is their prayer").

The great truth of THE UNSEEN PRESENCE OF GOD, transcendent and yet immanent, is here simply and movingly stated (1 Chron. xxviii. 3; 1 Kings viii. 27; ix. 3—"name" is equivalent to personal presence). But paganism never understood this (cf. Pompey's astonishment when, having captured Jerusalem in 55 B.C., he entered the Temple and found "nothing" in the Holy of Holies).

Despite the traditional account of SOLOMON, however, the departure from the Covenant which was the tragedy of the people of God really began with him: he used forced labour and intolerable taxation in order to carry on his magnificent building operations: to secure peace and increase prosperity, he made foreign alliances sealed by marriage with princesses who brought the worship of pagan deities into the land of their adoption (see p. 99). Hebrew faith and morals were forged amidst the rigours of the desert and the struggle for conquest of the Promised Land. With Solomon there began the mischief which proved repeatedly ruinous for the 500 years between his reign and the Exile—with prosperity almost always came forgetfulness of God, of the great deliverance and of the Covenant.

(5) *The Degradation of Religion*

The recurrent tendencies of the people, under the influence of unworthy kings, to syncretism, on the one hand, and the divorce of religion from morality, on the other, have already been dealt with (p. 105 f.). Elijah, Amos, Micah and Isaiah are not merely protestants against corruption and disloyalty. They

represent a series of developments in the fuller and deeper knowledge of God. Each contributes, from his own experience and meditation, a distinctive teaching about God and the relationship of His people to Him. The two facts which all of them keep constantly in view are the Covenant and the particular circumstances of the time. To understand the meaning of their messages for those to whom they preached, it is necessary to have before the mind's eye a picture of what was going on, not only in Israel and Judah, but in the great world, at the centre of which Palestine lay. The work done in the first senior year must be recalled for this purpose (pp. 107-18). For a good, brief account see Professor S. H. Hooke, *Prophets and Priests* (Murby, 15.). Professor Theodore Robinson's outline of "The History of Israel" in *A Companion to the Bible* (ed. T. W. Manson), pp. 204-70, is excellent.

THE ELIJAH STORIES came from sources in which legend played a large part, and with legend, the crudely miraculous. For this prophet the first and greatest issue was whether God's people could add the worship of other gods to the worship of Yahweh and still on their side keep the Covenant. In the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxiii. 32-3) there is evidence of the belief that to allow the older inhabitants of the land to continue to dwell there was to endanger the purity of Hebrew life and worship. Elijah could be ruthless in exterminating the prophets of Baal because his conception of God was still tribal, primitive and exclusive. Amos, a century later (*circa* 760-750), could say that, though other peoples had their own gods, Yahweh was, nevertheless, interested in those peoples and had to do with their fortunes as peoples (Amos ix. 7). Hosea (750-735) dwells upon the love as well as the righteousness of God: Isaiah (744-701) insists that there is no need to enlist armed force to resist the

incursions of paganism, for God's own presence in the Temple makes Jerusalem impregnable (Isa. xxvi. 1-4, xxix. 5-8).

If therefore the great period of the Prophets begins with the thought of Yahweh as fierce in the defence of his rights over his people and in his demands upon them, there is a steadily increasing stress upon the inwardness of both religion and morality, which may be seen even in the experience of Elijah himself after his destruction of the prophets of Baal: the voice of God in a man's heart is surer evidence of God's reality and power than either a physical triumph over the idolaters or the portents of Nature which pagans supposed to be direct action on the part of their gods (1 Kings xix. 11-13). Moreover, there is more true religion about, even in bad times, than is apparent even to a great prophet (1 Kings xix. 14, 18). And in the bitter, internecine conflict which the sin and folly of men bring about, the judgments of God are at work—not the carrying out of orders that He has given, but the vindication of the truth that evil brings its own destruction; the Greeks believed in Fate and Nemesis, but the Hebrews (though at first only in a crude fashion) in a moral order established and maintained by a just and righteous God (1 Kings xix. 17).

As for the miracle upon MOUNT CARMEL, various rationalising explanations have been offered: violent storms of lightning preceding the rain which broke the drought, the presence of a petroleum spring and vapours, even trickery on Elijah's part. But while in all probability many of the minor miracles attributed to Elijah and Elisha are cases of the "heightening" by legend of relatively normal incidents, the historical outcome of this occasion was so decisive that we can hardly doubt that something very unusual did occur and was interpreted by the Hebrews neither as magic

nor as mere coincidence, but at the very least as Providence and not chance: the Hebrews did emphatically believe that God controlled Nature and history, not arbitrarily, but in accordance with justice and mercy.

AMOS and HOSEA saw the providence and sovereignty of God more in the inevitable effect of men's actions, according as these were good or evil, loyal to the Covenant or neglectful of it and even defiant towards it. More and more, as the eighth- and seventh-century prophetic movement reached its peak, is insistence laid upon motive rather than upon external obedience to ritual and moral requirements. MICAH (*circa* 702) fiercely reiterates the denunciations of a Covenant-breaking people uttered by the greater prophets of his time, but is immortalised by the sentence in which he sums up all that underlies the Book of the Covenant and the Ten Commandments (Mic. vi. 8).

ISAIAH I presents a vivid picture of people who were enthusiastic about religious forms and ceremonies, but who had lost sight of the truth about God and themselves. The chapter shows the influence of Amos' protest and Hosea's appeal: it presents God as a God whose moral integrity is not undermined by His invincible love, any more than the victory of His love implies any deflection of His judgments. The way of repentance is urged upon the people and the "doctrine of the remnant"—i.e. that salvation for the people is of God through the little company of those who are loyal to Him—makes its appearance (Isa. i. 9). This later becomes of great importance when, at the time of the Exile, the meaning of vicarious suffering is brought out. The one hope for the people is that the Covenant was initiated by God and that it is supremely an expression of His love and mercy—that with Him lies not only the power to remedy His people's failings, but the

purpose to deliver them even at great cost from their sin and to win them to right relationship with Himself.

(6) *Attempts at Reform*

For JOSIAH, see p. 112. His was the last great effort to bring Israel back into the way of the Covenant before the final discipline of defeat and exile fell upon the nation. He attempted to centralise sacrificial worship in Jerusalem and to regularise the priesthood; to what extent this attempt was in fact successful is not clear, but at least he established the principle, even if sacrifices continued to be offered in some places other than Jerusalem. The great importance of his régime, of course, is that it made possible the "publishing" (621) of that part of DEUTERONOMY described by Hilkiyah as "THE BOOK OF THE LAW" (2 Kings xxii. 8), and the acceptance of the nobler interpretation of the Covenant which distinguishes it from the rest of the Pentateuch (2 Kings xxiii. 2).

JEREMIAH'S PREACHING (626-circa 580) was contemporary with Josiah's reformation and with the reaction under succeeding kings. Jer. vii. 1-11 is evidence, therefore, that even though the Jews in general complied with Josiah's ordinances and much was made of the worship now centred in Jerusalem, there had been little real return to genuine Covenant-religion as Amos, Hosea and Isaiah had taught it. There was even backsliding to idolatry and syncretism (verse 9). Jeremiah, like all the eighth- and seventh-century prophets, demanded deeds, not words. It was no doubt the situation as well as the phrase (verse 11) which Jesus recalled when He cleansed the Temple (Mark xi. 17).

(7) The Discipline of the Exile

The Babylonians ("Chaldeans") of the second Babylonian Empire were less ruthless than the Assyrians whom they had overthrown. The Jewish kings, after Josiah, were not only reactionaries in religion, but were weak and faithless in their relationships with Nebuchadrezzar, now their overlord. It was their repeated and foolhardy exhibition of pride and rebelliousness that brought punishment and exile upon them. Plainly neither priests nor people dissented sufficiently from the spirit and policy of the kings to prevent national decadence and disaster. Jeremiah (see p. 117) could see clearly enough that there could be only one end to it all. But, though he was carried with the fear-stricken insurgents into Egypt (2 Kings xxv. 26) and, it seems, died there, he saw also that in the purpose of God loss of the Holy City, of the Temple and of the land itself was not to be punishment and nothing more. Out of exile should come a redeemed people with a new vision of worship and service. The great UNKNOWN PROPHET of the Exile ("Second Isaiah") it was who preached the Gospel of the Old Testament—redemption by vicarious suffering after pain had brought penitence. Isa. xl is the beginning of the record of the unknown prophet's preaching. (Note the renderings in R.V., marg.) But all issued from the fidelity of God and His loving-kindness: He could not treat the people's departure from the Covenant as though it was anything but culpable sin; but His love and mercy were inexhaustible.

(8) The Lessons of the Exile

See outline in the *Syllabus*, and note that personal responsibility is possible because of personal freedom to respond to God's call and guidance or to refuse. There

was no fatalism or determinism in the insistence that as a man sows he must reap. But Jer. xxxi. 31-4 is the classic and unforgettable statement of the new understanding of the Covenant—essentially a moral and spiritual relationship: cf. the saying of Jesus, Matt. xv. 18-19, and His summing up of Commandments, Law and Prophets, Mark xii. 28-34; Matt. xxii. 40.

EZEKIEL, a priest as well as a prophet, was carried captive to Babylon in 597, and prophesied from 592 to 570 or later. He spoke much of the siege and fall of Jerusalem (xxiv. 1 ff., xxxiii. 21). The later part of his book (xl-xlvi), recording visions in 572, deals with the rebuilding of the Temple. Some scholars think that these elaborate plans for the structure, the ordering of the priesthood, and the ritual of the services, are the work of another, whose writings were subsequently attached to those of Ezekiel. In any case the long deprivation of Temple-worship which the Jews had suffered made them the more eager for a restoration which would surpass even the glory of former times. This is what is meant by "a new institutionalism" in the *Syllabus*. In Babylon the Jews had the Law, the Sabbath, and the Synagogue, but no sacrifices and no centre of pilgrimage at the great festival times in their sacred year. They learned that true religion is not dependent upon Temple and sacrifice, but still longed for their Temple and its Altar (cf. Ps. cxxxvii).

As time went on, world changes became imminent. The Persian power was growing and the Babylonian Empire was soon to yield to it, as the Babylonians had overthrown the Assyrians. It is against this background that THE UNKNOWN PROPHET writes, for he sees in Cyrus (probably a Zoroastrian—and the teachings of Zoroaster were perhaps the noblest and purest in the ancient world after those of the Hebrew Prophets), not only

a prospective deliverer of the Jews, but the very messenger of God (Isa. xlv. 24, 28; xlv. 1). "We may, then, with confidence assign xl-xlvi to a date between 546, when Cyrus gained his great victory over Crœsus, and 538, the year of his triumphal entry into Babylon."

With all the exultation at the prospect of return to Jerusalem there is a great purification of the soul of the people—shown even in the way in which the ultimate overthrow of all who resist the purpose of God for and in His people is proclaimed (Isa. xli. 11–16). This passage may be "eschatological"—a picture of the last things, and later than its context: "All Israel's foes shall perish. Yahweh's people shall destroy their enemies as a threshing-sledge so powerful that it tears in pieces the threshing-floor itself, and even the hill upon which—to catch the breezes—the floor is situated." (Wardle in *Peake's Commentary*, p. 462.)

The hope, however, is no longer that of Jewish national independence and power for its own sake. Prophets and people have been driven to ask why the Covenant nation should have suffered in exile the loss of practically everything that had marked it out from other nations—land, Holy City, Temple, sacrifices, even national life. The reply was that this was indeed punishment for the people's sin of Covenant-breaking, but a redeeming punishment, revealing to them God's mercy and faithfulness as well as His righteousness, driving them back to reliance upon His purpose of love for them, preparing them to serve Him anew and aright. It would also demonstrate to all the nations that SUFFERING is not an arbitrary penalty for sin but an inevitable outcome of it necessarily shared by those who have not sinned, because of their corporate relationship with the sinners. In such suffering as that of Israel in exile there was a vicarious element: the way in which it was borne turned it into an agency of

redemption. Henceforth Israel should be the redeemed and purified messenger of God to the nations.

This is the burden of the four "SERVANT SONGS" (Isa. xlii. 1-4, xlix. 1-6, l. 4-9, lii. 13-liii. 12), probably composed by the Prophet independently of the rest of his writings and introduced subsequently by him into their present place. The perplexing question is, to whom do they refer? The historical people of Israel, an idealised Israel, a devoted and faithful handful of the people (the "remnant"), a single individual—advocates of each view are to be found. Wheeler Robinson's phrase, "Corporate personality" may well be the key (see *The Cross of the Servant*, pp. 32-7). "The whole group is a unity, present in any one of its members, as Paul makes the whole race to be present in Adam. . . . Such a use is much more than a conscious metaphor, as it would necessarily be for us; it echoes deep-rooted ideas of collectivity, out of which the clearer distinction of the individual and the society have but slowly emerged. It explains the perplexing phenomena of many of the Psalms, in which it is still a debated question whether the individual or the community is speaking. The true answer would seem to be that it is both, or rather that there is a consciousness of both as so united in the speaker that he can emphasize now one side, now the other, without needing to draw a definite line." This does not preclude the suggestion that the sufferings and spirit of Jeremiah may have helped to suggest this rich and deep interpretation by the unknown prophet of the meaning of Israel's suffering (see p. 114).

Prophecy, as we have said, is forthtelling rather than foretelling, the proclamation of profound truth made clear to the prophet by his insight into God's dealing with men in past and contemporary history rather than foresight of events in a far-distant future. It is not

disbelief in prophecy, but a truer understanding of it, that leads the greatest interpreters of the Bible in our own day to say that the unknown prophet can hardly be supposed to be referring to Jesus Christ. But, they also affirm, "the Old Testament reaches no greater height than the portrayal of Israel suffering vicariously for the other nations, a picture of such deep spiritual insight that Christians have rightly felt that none save Jesus, who concentrated and exhausted in His own Person Israel's significance for the world, has adequately met its demands" (Wardle, *loc. cit.*). Jesus Himself united the conception of the Suffering Servant with that of the Messiah in contemplating His own mission (see p. 44).

Note R.V. marg. renderings in Isa. xl. 2.

(9) *The Return from Exile*

It was hardly to be expected that the Jews, who had increasingly idealised Jerusalem during their half-century of absence and returned in 536 with such exultations of joy, should have foreseen the state of the devastated city and Temple. There was sharp reaction and profound disillusionment. While they never went back to idolatry or syncretism, there was much RELIGIOUS APATHY. Centralisation of sacrificial worship at Jerusalem tended to produce secularism in the country. Even yet the Jews were not ready (cf. *Abingdon Commentary*, p. 816) for "the lofty conception of the presence of Jehovah which could dispense with a house made with hands. The common people needed the Temple as an external symbol of the presence of Jehovah as much as earlier generations ever needed the ark."

In 521 Darius the Great succeeded Cyrus. There were outbreaks of rebellion in various parts of the

Empire. Zerubbabel, of Davidic descent, was made ruler of Judah by Darius, and with him came Joshua, who was in the orthodox line of the priesthood. HAGGAI in 520 saw here the signs that the time for the setting up of A MESSIANIC KINGDOM under Zerubbabel had come (ii. 23); and that now the people must set to work and REBUILD THE TEMPLE (ii. 4), so that peace and prosperity (the word in ii. 9 implies both) should finally come to the people of the covenant (ii. 5—like all the prophets and psalmists, Haggai recalls the deliverance from Egypt as the great act and pledge of Yahweh).

The response was but temporary. Haggai made another appeal, again with some effect. But the challenge was taken up by ZECHARIAH, his contemporary, in a series of allegories. The young man with a measuring line is more concerned with city walls than with a Temple—with military defence than with spiritual security and growth. This, says Zechariah, is to miss the truth. The presence of Yahweh is indeed the true strength and protection of His people, but Jerusalem shall be so populous that the thought of an enclosing wall would be absurd (ii. 1–6). The building of the Temple was completed by 516.

The story of NEHEMIAH (*circa* 445) and EZRA (*circa* 398) has already been told (p. 128). Idealist though he was, Nehemiah regarded the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem as necessary to the safety of the city. When at last restoration and security in the physical and political sense had been accomplished, Ezra recalled the people to their religious tradition. The “BOOK OF THE LAW” from which Ezra read to the people (Neh. viii. 1–8), was approximately OUR PENTATEUCH, edited since the Deuteronomic reform under Josiah in 621 by the priestly writers (P) during and after the Exile (but see pp. 129 *f.*), with notable additions such as the greater part of Leviticus (so closely akin to Ezek. xl to

xlvi). Acceptance of this made the Jews henceforth emphatically the "people of the Book"—a book in which two strains are equally marked, the Deuteronomic with its stress on the inwardness of religion and the Levitical with the importance attached to ritual and ceremonial observance. From that time to the days of Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul—till the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), in fact—there were always strong rival parties in Judaism advocating first and foremost the one or the other of these emphases, though the original authors of the two elements in the Pentateuch had no intention of exalting either to the complete exclusion of the other.

On the *Syllabus* paragraph concerning the universalistic ideal, note that Isa. xix is thought to belong to this late period, though inserted among the prophecies uttered by Isaiah of Jerusalem 300 years earlier, and that Isa. lvi-lxv is a collection of prophecies by still A THIRD "ISAIAH" (or possibly more than one author—unknown, like the author of Isa. xl-lv, and contemporary, perhaps, with Nehemiah-Ezra). The Book of Jonah is usually ascribed to "the period which began with the reforms of Nehemiah," and of the 150 Psalms in the Old Testament book a large number were written during and after the Exile. The date of Tobit is 200-170, and of Enoch vi-xxxvi probably between 200 and 170 B.C. Enoch is one of the group of apocalyptic books never included even in the Apocrypha, but very expressive of, and influential upon, Jewish religious thought from the time of the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes (168 B.C.) till the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70).

Gore's *Commentary* includes, as *Peake's* and the *Abingdon* do not, the O.T. Apocrypha. An account of Apocalyptic literature by H. T. Andrews will be found in *Peake*, pp. 430-5, and one of Apocalyptic religion

by Wheeler Robinson in *A Companion to the Bible*, pp. 307-11. (See p. 143.)

(10) *Lessons Learnt in these Centuries of Distress*

The "Remnant" and Restoration.

Isaiah's belief that the purpose of God for His people could not be frustrated, but would be fulfilled through A FAITHFUL "REMNANT," comes out in Isa. xxxv. Whether or not this chapter was addressed to "Jews still in exile and undelivered," it is somewhat detached from the rest of Isa. i-xlix and may well, by reason of its splendid faith and lyrical quality, have become a poem so beloved of successive generations that it was symbolic to them of their most exalted hopes as we often make the lines beginning "and did those feet in ancient times," from Blake's *Jerusalem*. Note R.V. marg., "mirage" for "glowing sand." Peake (*Commentary*, p. 459), on v. 8, says "'for those' read 'for his people,' and continue 'When it walks in the way, and fools shall not go to and fro in it.' 'Fools' bears a moral rather than an intellectual sense. They are the irreligious, and they will be excluded. The English Version is singularly unfortunate, since it has been commonly taken to mean that the way to heaven is so plain that not even a fool can miss it." Note R.V. marg.

Zech. viii. 1-8 is one of the loveliest pictures of the RESTORED JERUSALEM that the Prophets give us. Note the reference in verse 7 to "the dispersion"—those Jews who had been scattered far beyond the borders of the Babylonian Empire, and many of whom never made Palestine their home again, though they kept the Jewish faith and eagerly desired to come to Jerusalem on pilgrimage (cf. Acts ii. 5-11; Isa. xi. 12; Ezek. xxxvi. 19; Zeph. iii. 10; John vii. 35).

The Intervention of God.

Two great themes emerge from Jewish reflection upon the disillusioning experiences of exile and, after restoration, repression and persecution. Despite the vision and faith of the Prophets, despite too the temporary triumphs of Nehemiah, Ezra and Judas Maccabæus, things were going patently from bad to worse. Paganism was in the ascendant: there was no prospect of effective human help, either as Moses and David had delivered and established the people or as Cyrus had set them free from captivity. So the Jews were forced to put their trust (i) in a future, swift and overwhelming exercise of God's power "to cast down and to build up" and (ii) in the coming of a great Emissary of God through whom this should be accomplished. These were the themes of the APOCALYPTIC and Eschatological literature and of the MESSIANIC HOPE. Daniel and Revelation are the two apocalyptic books in the Bible, but during the last half-century a great deal more has come to be known about many surviving books of this type and period, with which undoubtedly Jesus was familiar, as He was with the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. The Messianic hope has its beginnings much earlier—possibly in the days of Isaiah of Jerusalem in the eighth century, but it becomes much more definite in this pre-Christian epoch of some three centuries.

Zech. ix-xiv is an instance of the way in which prophecies by a little-known (to us unknown) prophet were attached to those by one whose name carried authority, since Hebrew and Jewish editors were more concerned with the genuinely prophetic quality of such documents than with their precise authorship. These chapters are post-Exilic, and xiv. 3 is held to be a reference to the success of the Maccabean revolt in

the second century B.C. The plundering of Jerusalem by the hostile nations will be a "day of the Lord," a visitation indeed, but not beyond God's providence. Out of the affliction will come God's vindication of Himself and His people, in response to their penitence and faith. Zechariah perhaps drew his allegory from the waters of Jerusalem's only spring, which flow from the bottom of the Temple hill through the Kidron valley into the Dead Sea. "A scoffer or despondent person might maintain that the limited effect of such a stream was a fair measure of the possible influence of Jewish religion on the heathen world of Asia. A river sufficient to produce any effect would require the removal of the Mount of Olives, which rises before Jerusalem on the East. . . . But when the Lord's return to Jerusalem is made manifest, when His feet stand, as it were, on the Mount of Olives, the obstruction to the flow of the living water will be removed, the mountain cleaving asunder so as to leave a vast channel in the midst through which the water may flow to the regeneration of the heathen world on the East" (*Peake's Commentary*, pp. 583 f., xiv. 5: read "stop up" for "flee"—the reference is not to the people, but to the stream; cf. R.V. marg.).

The whole passage illustrates the political and symbolic nature of prophetic references to THE "DAY OF THE LORD," usually associated with physical portents. The essence of it is that while the final ("eschatological") triumph of the power of God shall bring security and joy to His covenanted people ("light" in verse 6 means freedom from the risk of attack by evil men under cover of dusk or darkness), it will mean the purifying of a penitent people so that they may be made morally and spiritually worthy to live under God's rule. Cf. the early reference to a "day of the Lord" in Amos v. 18, and again in Joel i. 14-15.

This is the thought expressed in Mal. iii. 1-6, where the authentic insistence of the prophets upon the connection between religion and morality appears in verses 5-6, together with the truth that the hope of erring Israel is in the consistency of God's holiness and love: these verses take us back to Amos and Hosea.

The "messenger of the Covenant" (Mal. iii. 1) may be the Messiah, possibly the Elijah of Mal. iv. 5 (cf. the reference to this in Mark ix. 4-13, vi. 15; Matt. xi. 14). Some scholars see here a reference to "the Angel of Yahweh," which is almost identifiable with the spiritual presence of God Himself (Gen. xxii. 11, xlviii. 16; Num. xx. 16; Isa. lxiii. 9). It seems clear here, however, that the messenger comes as God's forerunner (cf. Mark i. 2, quoting Mal. iii. 1; Isa. xl. 3). In both the Biblical and the non-Biblical literature of this period the Messiah is represented as an exalted being created and sent by God, not as God Himself in human form. "SON OF MAN" has a variety of meanings, including "Man" generally, "A Man," and "A Representative Man." In practically every chapter of Ezekiel it is used to indicate the prophet himself. On the other hand, throughout the Gospels it is used by Jesus as the title which of all others He preferred (cf. Matt. xvi. 13, R.V. marg.; viii. 20; Mark ix. 13; Luke ix. 22, xix. 10, xxii. 48). Note that in Dan. vii. 13-14 the phrase is "one like unto a son of man"—i.e. of human appearance though heavenly origin—and that it is not to be taken literally, as indicating an individual person, but is a symbolic phrase for "the people of the saints of the Most High," though subsequent writers used it as meaning "the Messiah" (cf. p. 37, and Manson, *Teaching of Jesus*, p. 212).

The Book of DANIEL belongs to the time of the persecution under Antiochus, and after recounting (i-vi) stories of great heroes for the encouragement of

those now "facing fearful odds" goes on in the apocalyptic manner (vii-xii) to proclaim in terms of vivid symbolism "the prophetic interpretation of contemporary history, extended to embrace all the generations according to some fixed scheme which is supposed to be revealed in advance to an elect man. This is usually some great figure of the past—Adam, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, etc.—who is permitted to see all future history unrolled before his eyes, in a vast panorama. . . . This vision extends, however, beyond the earth to heaven and hell, and the emphasis falls indeed on resurrection and the blessed life after death." Wheeler Robinson, *The Old Testament*, p. 125.

It is in Enoch (see p. 230) xlv. 2 ff. (cf. xlviii. 3 ff., lii. 4, lxii. 9 ff., lxix. 26 ff.) that the term "Son of Man" is first clearly applied, at a time much later than Daniel, no longer to the actual or ideal Israel, but to a personal, pre-existent, anointed being who is to judge kings and rulers and destroy sinners, while also he is called "the light of the Gentiles." This is a very considerable advance upon the conception of the Son of Man in Daniel, though it falls short of the meaning given to the term by Jesus when He took it over, as He did so many other phrases and conceptions, from Judaism and gave it, by His use of it and by His own Life, Death and Resurrection, a unique significance.

(II) *Development of Personal Religion*

The Hebrew word for the underworld was *sheol*, and those who had gone thither were spoken of as "the shades." "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Ps. cxv. 17). But when, after the Exile, faith in the future of Israel became, by contrast with realisation of the apparent hopelessness of the world as it was, faith in a transformed world

order, and when the doctrine of individual responsibility to God developed, belief in the PERSONAL IMMORTALITY of the righteous became widespread. When the day of the Lord came, good men who were then alive would be gathered into His Kingdom. But how could the justice and fidelity of God be reconciled with the fact that other good men missed their reward because they had already died? Job faces the more searching question of why innocent men suffer. Job xiv. 14, xix. 25-7; Dan. xii. 2-3; Isa. xxvi. 14-19 and possibly xxv. 7-8 constitute the only definite references to a true personal life beyond this life found in the Old Testament. (Isa. xxiv-xxvii is not the work of Isaiah of Jerusalem but seems to be a post-exilic apocalypse of about 300 B.C.)

The Book of Wisdom is among the noblest of the apocryphal books (see p. 137). Wisd. iii. 1-9, ii. 23 reflects a more impersonal and detached conception of the eternal world than the impassioned phrases of Daniel, Job and "Isaiah"—perhaps a result of the effort to relate Hebrew religious conviction with Greek philosophical thought. But the whole world was eager for "the medicine of immortality" and it is no disparagement of Jewish thought that it was stimulated, enriched and fertilised by contact with that of Babylonia, Persia and Greece.

II. THE NEW COVENANT

Jesus Christ is at once the fulfilment of the ancient promise and the embodiment of a new one. In Jesus God made incarnate His own nature as fully as it can be expressed in a personality completely human. In Him God took such action, consummated indeed on the Cross and in the Resurrection but manifest by every word and deed throughout His life, that the meaning

and consequences of sin for God and man were made terribly clear. At the same time the assurance of forgiveness and of power to live a new life was given as clearly to all who would accept these gifts in penitence and faith. So in Jesus Christ a new covenant-relationship was established between God and men. The Christian life consists not only in believing in God, Creator, Lord and Father: it is a transformation of the whole of our individual and corporate life, a rebirth and a new way, a full response to what God has done, made possible to us as we share the spirit of Jesus.

In this part of the *Syllabus* we seek to understand what it was that Jesus did among men, what was their response, and how the community of Christians called the Church forms a living link between its Founder and ourselves. Many of the passages cited from the Gospels consist only of a verse or two bearing upon the point under consideration. This is not meant to suggest a series of homilies by the teacher, e.g. on "hypocrites," or "taking up the Cross," but to show how both the Christian Way and the Christian Faith spring out of the life and teaching of Jesus as a whole and out of the experience of those who heard Him and lived with Him. Most of the material comes from Q, M and L, as a synopticon (*Syllabus*, p. 146) will show.

A. Personal Religion.

(1) *The Call to Personal Religion.* (a) The Baptist took his imagery from the countryside amidst which he was preaching, e.g. snakes driven from their holes by bush fires. Nothing, he said, but PERSONAL REPENTANCE (*metanoia*, "change of attitude": Matt. iii. 8, R.V. marg.), expressed in deeds, denotes living religion.

ACTORS may play their parts sincerely, yet live by false values if they take their dramatisation, instead of life itself, as the real thing. Those Pharisees whom Jesus

condemned forgot that ordinary behaviour, "doing justly, loving mercy, walking humbly with God," had anything to do with the Covenant and the Kingdom of God. Cf. the degeneration from the spirit of Cromwell, Milton or Colonel Hutchinson to proverbial "puritanism," or from the churchmanship of Pusey, Keble and Newman to mere ritualism and "churchiness." When men lose the religious motive in love of praise or greed of gain, the severest judgment on them is the inevitable one—they get what they want but never know what they miss: cf. Browning's *The Lost Leader*. But there were Pharisees who had not made this dire mistake: to them Jesus spoke very differently (e.g. Nicodemus, John iii. 1-15: probably also the rich young ruler, Mark x. 17-22).

(b) We need not assume that Jesus had never met Simon and Andrew, James and John before (Mark i. 16-20). The point is that when He did call them they did not hesitate to leave even their livelihood. So with Levi, presumably far more cautious and less adventurous (Mark ii. 14). FAITH is this complete self-committal, illustrated again by the woman who trusted what she recognised in Jesus as sympathy and power (Mark v. 25-34), or by the centurion who knew real authority when he met it (Luke vii. 2-9). It was generally believed that sickness and physical defect were the punishment of sin or the work of evil spirits (John ix. 2; Mark ix. 17-29); for miracles of healing see p. 25. Faith was as much needed in returning home and witnessing there as in giving up all to accompany Jesus (Mark v. 19, viii. 26). Faith is not credulity: it takes the facts into account and then goes, not contrary to but beyond them. See also p. 242, and *Syllabus*, p. 100.

SAYING NO TO SELF is neither making a virtue of asceticism nor merely giving up petty indulgences. It is affirming the mastery of Christ and therefore saying

no to whatever in oneself conflicts with this. In Palestine at that time "taking up the Cross" meant that a man was already on the way to execution: it would have been ridiculous and almost indecent then to use such a metaphor of small deprivations, trials or persecutions. On Jesus' lips it was a measure of the greatness, almost the desperateness, of a supreme adventure (cf. p. 39).

CONVERSION (Matt. xviii. 3; Luke xxii. 32) and spiritual rebirth (John iii. 1-5) are different aspects of the same radical process, which takes various forms according to the temperament and circumstances of the individual. Conversion may be "sudden" or "gradual": it is natural in adolescence but may happen much later (e.g. Paul, Augustine).¹ In the teaching of Jesus conversion means a deliberate "turning" of the will and affections to a new centre of thought and purpose. Nicodemus evidently thought that a man could be *taught* the secret of the Kingdom. Jesus replied that teaching is not enough. A child must be born before it can grow or be taught. "Born *again*" may mean *anew* (R.V.), or *from above* (A.V. and R.V. marg.). "The birth which is required is not merely a second birth—this is the misunderstanding of Nicodemus—but birth from above, birth of the Spirit, birth of God. This is the fundamental meaning; but it necessarily carries with it an emphasis upon the newness, indeed the completeness, of the life which is given by God Himself" (Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, I, 227). The coming of a child, a new life, into the world by "natural process" of generation and birth is in fact a mystery of God's creative activity. He who would be a child of God must submit himself humbly, expectantly, to God's creative touch upon his spirit.

¹ See the present writer's book, *Religion and the Growing Mind*, pp. 136ff. (Nisbet).

with Jesus Christ (Rom. viii. 9-14). He served a brotherhood in affection (Philem. 12), not a cause in fanatical zeal (Acts xxvi. 11). His energies were spent no longer in hating adversaries and renegades, as he had thought them, but in praying both for his friends (Rom. i. 9; Eph. iii. 14; Phil. i. 4) and no less for his enemies (2 Cor. xiii. 9-10).

(2) *The Foundations of Personal Religion.* (a) *Personal Faith in God.* It was part of Jesus' real manhood that He should constantly have to act upon faith rather than precise foreknowledge. Had it been otherwise the stresses and heroic adventures of His life (especially in Gethsemane and on Calvary) could have been no more than the playing of a part. Faith is complete confidence in God, self-committal to Him, action in accordance with what we understand to be His will, whatever the consequences (cf. p. 238). It is that life of trust and obedience which early Christians called "the Way" (Acts ix. 2). But this is natural since God is Father (Luke ii. 49; John iv. 34, ix. 4, x. 28-30; Luke xxiii. 46).

The phrase about "moving mountains" (cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 2) was proverbial (cf. p. 233): Luke's variant, "sycamine tree," may be reflected in Mark xi. 22. In Matt. xvii the contrast between mustard seed and mountain emphasises the apparent absurdity and impossibility of the assertion made by Jesus. But a parable was intended to startle people into thinking for themselves. Jesus never meant that the exercise of faith was a kind of magic, irrational and arbitrary, a means of securing whatever one happens to covet or fancy. All is in the service of that will of God which Jesus was wholly committed to fulfil. The petitions in the Lord's Prayer follow, and are to be harmonised with, "Hallowed be Thy name."

(b) *Personal Faith in Jesus Christ.* cf. pp. 175, 186 and

Syllabus, pp. 100, 103-6. 2 Cor. v. 14 *f.* should not be omitted, for Christianity is indivisibly social and personal (cf. Jesus' "Two Commandments," p. 170). In the pagan world popular belief in the gods was mainly superstitious, and for the philosophers the idea of God was very abstract (e.g. the Stoic "soul of the world"). Jews thought of God as personal, but chiefly as Creator and Ruler. To live with Jesus of Nazareth led inevitably to belief in the Father of and to whom He so constantly spoke. In Jesus the power of God to overcome sin and death had been fully manifested, so that to believe in Jesus was to have one's faith and hope in God (1 Pet. i. 21), and thus to experience a new moral and spiritual energy in oneself (Phil. iv. 13). Knowledge of Jesus such as the first disciples gained during His ministry became love, from which sprang obedience, and this brought power—but power of such a kind that it could have only one source, namely, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ: thus, Peter, John, Paul and the others were convinced that all began in God, and that the love of Christ for them was the love of God, while those who had not seen Him nevertheless had a living portrait of Him presented first in the apostolic preaching and then, as we now have it, in the Gospels (cf. 1 Pet. i. 8).

1 John iv. 9-19 (note verse 9) and Gal. ii. 20 epitomise the Gospel and therefore the motive for Christian conduct, personal and social. Propitiation is a difficult word but (*a*) it is connected with the "Mercy Seat" above the Ark of the Covenant, where the forgiving grace of a holy God was manifest: cf. Exod. xxv. 22; Lev. xvi. 2; (*b*) the idea is that of reconciliation, a restoration of the covenant-relationship in which God takes the first step, as He had done in the institution of it (Dodd: *The Bible and the Greeks*, ch. v); see p. 214 and cf. R.V. marg. references; (*c*) for love of man God sent

His Son (John iii. 16) but to suppose that God could make His Son a mere blood-victim upon whom to wreak cruel vengeance for men's sins would rob the very words love and righteousness of meaning (cf. p. 125). The Atonement will ever remain a mystery of God's grace and wisdom, but we ought not to accept any theory of it which plainly travesties the nature of God as Jesus Himself made this known to us. The *fact* of the winning back of men to Himself by God at unutterable cost is the foundation of Christian faith, hope and love, and the apostolic phrase which expresses it is "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 19). Jesus actively identified Himself with that purpose and was no passive victim either of man's sin or of God's wrath against it, both of which are inescapable facts. He met and conquered sin by suffering pain and death while forgiving those who inflicted these as the worst that they could do to Him: therein He expressed the Divine nature.

(c) *The Result in Personal Conduct.* For the "Two Commandments" see p. 170. Neighbour, to the Jew, meant a member of his own race. Alongside Lev. xix. 18 the rabbis placed Deut. xxiii. 3-6, which they interpreted as "hate thine enemy" (cf. Ps. cxxxvii). Despite the Servant Songs and Jonah men did not apprehend the truth till Jesus preached it—and died for it. Samaritans, with whom Jews had no dealings (John iv. 9), were as nearly "neighbours" to Jews as could be (cf. p. 131), which of course is the dramatic point of the Good Samaritan parable. But Jesus went still deeper: neighbours are not made such by race or nation, common belief or common purpose. A man's neighbour is any one in need and all are brothers deeply related in the Fatherhood of God. Love is not just affection but an ethical purpose which seeks a neighbour's good at all costs (cf. 1 John iv. 9-19). And

love of neighbour is not weak self-submission: we are to love him as ourselves; mutual respect and self-respect alike belong to members of God's own family.

The "warnings" are practical. These two wrong attitudes and impulses are responsible for most of the disastrous conflicts, whether individual or corporate, between men. "ENEMIES" may not even know that they are enemies, or wish to be such, but even when they are consciously and bitterly so love seeks to transform them by suffering at their hands, and the prayer of Jesus for His enemies is the great example of His practising what He preached (Luke xxiii. 34). "Perfect"—*teleioi*—means complete, in the sense of fully developed, neither one-sided nor immature; it is the quality of "wholeness." Matt. xviii. 28-35 insists that love knows no limits in its quest of reconciliation, at whatever cost to itself.

"Treasures in heaven" are not stores of merit, but elements of moral and spiritual character. Eastern wealth often consists largely of garments; "rust" is literally "eating," and refers to mice and other vermin. "Mammon" is an Aramaic word for wealth, "single" often means liberal, and "evil" grudging or niggardly, while "dark" was a colloquialism for uncharitable. As to vi. 24, a slave might be bequeathed partly to one master and partly to another. (*Peake's Commentary*, p. 707.)

B. Corporate Religion.

(1) The Call to Corporate Religion.

(a) *Personal Religion a Way into the Kingdom.* The theme of Jesus' preaching was THE KINGDOM OF GOD—not a politico-religious transformation and supremacy of the Jewish nation brought about by a Messiah suddenly appearing in glory from the skies, but the creation of a moral and spiritual community

by the re-birth, the renewal, of individual men and women and the supremacy of God in their lives. Jesus preached the Kingdom to the multitudes but insisted that every man must face and accept for himself the conditions of membership illustrated by the sayings cited in i (a). These involved trust, devotion, discipline and persistence. Mark ix. 47 means that a thing good, valuable, even apparently indispensable in itself, must be brought under control or even sacrificed if a man cannot resist the temptation to excessive or wrong use of it. "Gehenna" is the place of burning outside the city walls, and here stands for the perpetual, devastating craving of lust which is never satisfied, the "appetite which grows by what it feeds on."

(b) *The Call of the Group*. Note the description of what the twelve were "called" (Matthew's word, x. 1), or "chosen" (Luke's word, vi. 13), to do (R.V. has "appointed" for A.V. "ordained"). They were learners (disciples) who were sent forth (apostles) to "publish abroad" (proclaim like heralds) as good news (gospel), what they had seen and heard and felt (1 John i. 1-4) in close companionship with Jesus their Lord and teacher (cf. p. 28). All Christian ministry was to be like that of Jesus Himself, not only in word but in power (e.g. Acts iii, iv. 7-10; Rom. xv. 19; 1 Cor. ii. 4). *Exousia* (authority) means not only right but capacity, and devils or demons were, as we should now say, those elements of evil desire, obsession, inhibition, unconscious conflict, disordered mental and moral energies, which result not only in sin but also (as modern physicians and psychiatrists tell us) even in physical illness. Surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ effects healing of the mind because it brings harmony and wholesome redirection of all the energies and powers of the personality, conscious and unconscious. In Mark vi. 7-13 the emphasis is on simplicity

and sincerity of living and concentration upon the task—with recognition that responsibility for acceptance or rejection must rest upon the hearers (cf. Acts xiii. 51, xviii. 5-6). But the messengers would inevitably evoke opposition and hatred and must even "hazard their lives" (cf. Acts xv. 26).

The passages from John on UNITY were written thirty years after those from Mark. By that time the Gospel had been preached to the Gentiles and there were Christian churches all the way from Jerusalem to Rome. Within Palestine itself Jesus must have met people (including Jews of the Dispersion) from all the great Gentile countries. Galilee was "Galilee of the Gentiles." As Palestine had been the highway and often the battleground of all the rival empires of the ancient world, so in Jesus' day the three great civilisations, Greek, Roman and Hebrew, met there. He could not fail to think in terms of the whole world, apart from the missionary vocation of the Jews after the Exile (cf. p. 120). Matt. xxviii. 19-20 emerges inevitably from the New Covenant and the Gospel of the Kingdom as Jesus proclaimed it. The Christian religion is for all men, and so far as it spreads to all nations it should bind men together as nothing else can (Matt. xxiii. 8-10; cf. Matt. xii. 50).

In John xvii. 9-21, verses 9-19 are a prayer for the Christian community. In its oneness within itself, created by the oneness of all its parts and members with God, is the hope that the truth will reach the world, and in this sense verse 9 is to be understood. Prayer for the world outside the Christian community follows in verses 20-1. "Sanctify"—R.V. marg., "consecrate."

THE LAST SUPPER (Matt. xxvi. 26-8; see pp. 58 f.) is mentioned here because it is the supreme symbol of unity. In primitive religion and in the mystery religions

of the East it was supposed that worshippers, by eating a victim dedicated to the god, shared the god's life and power, since the god also took part in the feast: indeed the god himself might be eaten under the form of the sacred animal. Sacred meals entered much into Jewish religion, long since purified of such superstitious elements, and in particular the Passover recalled the mercy of God in delivering His people from bondage in Egypt to freedom as a nation covenanted to serve Him. Mark, followed by Matthew and Luke, seems to identify the Last Supper with the Passover meal, whereas John xiii leads to the conclusion that the meal must have been the *kiddûsh* (p. 58). In any case the use that Jesus made of it transcended Jewish religious traditions. As the Passover meal was connected with the old Covenant, so this is related to the new Covenant. He is about to lay down His life but it will not be extinguished. He will "take it again" and impart its energies to them in and through the fellowship created by His life and death, symbolised by the bread and wine, and enduring beyond death. Note the connection between "fruit of the vine" and John xv. 1-5. "Unto remission," because by His death men would be brought to repentance (pp. 45, 125; cf. Acts v. 31).

(c) *Our Lord and Corporate Prayer*. The three forms of corporate worship amongst the Jews after the Exile were sacrificial worship carried out with great impressiveness at the Temple; synagogue worship, which was more simple and intimate (cf. p. 149), and was established wherever there was a Jewish community; family worship, which was regular each day and on occasion included special observances, e.g. at Passover time. The Gospels show that Jesus took His full part in all these.

Rabbis often formulated prayers which they used and taught their disciples, as John the Baptist evidently

did (Luke xi. 1). The shorter form of THE LORD'S PRAYER (Luke xi. 2-4, note R.V. marg.: cf. Matt. vi. 9-13) is probably the earlier. Jesus responded to the disciples' request not by maxims about prayer but by a perfectly constructed and expressed example of what should be in men's minds when they approach God, and in what order their thoughts should move from adoration and submission to confession and petition, from God's sovereignty to men's daily life and need. We cannot use it individually and privately without being reminded by the very words that whenever we seek our Father we do so as members of a family—and this is the one prayer used in common by all parts of the Christian Church. Unreflective repetition of the Lord's Prayer obviously robs it of its chief value (cf. too, Matt. vi. 7).

"Hallowed" means not merely venerated, but given pre-eminence in every thought and deed as well as in specific acts of worship, for "Name" practically means "person, self." *Epiousios*, translated "daily," may mean "to-day's supply," or "sufficient for to-morrow"; the petition is for the supply of immediate necessities, which it is natural and right for children to ask of their father, even though he knows their need and they have no occasion to be anxious (Matt. vi. 8, 25-34). Sin was often spoken of by the rabbis as debt—failure to pay to God what is due to Him in reverence and obedience, but Jesus never interpreted sin and forgiveness in any legalistic way, as some Christian theologians have done. "Temptation" here is perhaps not confrontation with choice between right and wrong (which may be good for the moral thews and sinews), but the great "fiery trial" which should precede the end of the age and the coming of the Messianic Kingdom (cf. the apocalyptic passages in Mark xiii and Matt. xxiv-xxv): the Kingdom was to be desired above all things, but

(Matt. xxiv. 15-22) the most pious and courageous might well pray to be spared the horrors of "that great and terrible day" (Joel ii. 11, 31).

Many of the phrases in the Lord's Prayer were already current in Jewish religious tradition, just as the two main clauses in Jesus' "Great Commandment" were. But in both cases He took the old and familiar and fused it into something new and vitalising.

"After this manner" (Matt. vi. 9) means more than "according to this pattern": the Lord's Prayer is a test of *all* our praying, and what boys and girls need most is not simply to be familiarised with particular prayers (however relevant and time-honoured), but to be taught *how to pray*, with minds fixed first of all upon God and His Kingdom, and hearts open to the claims and needs of others. For that reason corporate prayers in school are so vital a part of religious education, inseparable, indeed, from the religious instruction given in the class-room. For that reason, too, boys and girls should not be allowed to suppose that a full and healthy Christian life can be lived apart from the fellowship of the Church in worship and service (cf. *Syllabus*, pp. 9-20).

(d) *Paul*. Conscious of a distinctive mission (Acts xxvi. 16-18; cf. pp. 189-92), and compelled at times to assert his independence (Gal. ii. 11-14, i. 11-12), Paul was beyond all other apostles a "minister of reconciliation" (2 Cor. v. 18-19). He could not live without fellowship, bear disharmony and animosity (Phil. i. 3-11; Rom. i. 11; 1 Cor. i. 11-13; Phil. iv. 3), or cease to insist upon the unity of the Church—not a uniformity, but a vital oneness in diversity (1 Cor. i. 4-6, xii. 4-31; Eph. iv. 1-16). This expressed Paul's natural generosity of temperament, but it was deep-rooted in the very nature of the Gospel (1 Cor. i. 13, xii. 27; Eph. ii. 16, iv. 4). His conception of the Church as the

body of Christ was no less practical than mystical (1 Cor. xii. 31-xiii. 13; Rom. xii; 1 Cor. x. 16-17). Paul's address to the Ephesian elders (Acts xx. 17-32) and Eph. iv. 1-16, portray both the life of the primitive Church and the principle on which it was established. *Agape* (love, in the sense of 1 Cor. xiii) and *Koinonia* (fellowship in the most active and concrete sense) were the warp and woof upon which the daily life of a Christian community was wrought (see Raven, *The Gospel and the Church*, pp. 131-5).

(2) *The Foundations of Corporate Religion*

(a) *The Corporate Faith of the Church and the Primary Confession.* To confess JESUS AS LORD (Rom. x. 9) means to accord to Him the name and title, *Kurios*, by which God is made known in the Old Testament (the Greek Septuagint translation was the link with the Hebrew word). This affirmed His divinity and 1 Cor. xii. 3 explicitly says that in doing so the Christian community was more than a Jewish sect (cf. Acts ii. 36—"both Lord and Christ") such as many outsiders thought it and some orthodox and favourably-disposed Jews would have made of it. No one who accepted the moral teaching of Christianity while anathematising the Lordship, in this sense, of Jesus, could be accounted Christian. On the other hand mere intellectual assent to what Christians said about Jesus was not enough. Christians were called upon to "sanctify Christ in your hearts as Lord" and to give to the world the evidence of "a good manner of life in Christ" (1 Pet. iii. 15-16). This distinguished Christians from all others (1 Cor. viii. 5) and precluded them from worshipping the Emperor as representative of the State (cf. pp. 260-2). But Jesus Christ was A LIVING LORD (Rom. x. 9; cf. Acts x. 38-43, ii. 36): the Gospel turned upon the fact

of the resurrection, without which there would have been no Christian community, and the life of the community consisted in spiritual fellowship "with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John i. 3).

While therefore the earliest confession was so simple it went to the very roots of EXPERIENCE, FAITH AND CONDUCT, as 1 John i. 1-ii. 6 suffices to show, beginning with testimony to what men had seen in the life of Jesus on earth and ending "he that saith he abideth in him ought himself to walk even as he walked." The confession "Jesus is Lord," required at baptism as a condition of admission to the fellowship of the Christian Church, was not an invented creed or a mere test of orthodox belief. It was the cry of a living faith (see p. 243) founded upon experience of fact, and it committed a man to "the Way" (Acts xxiv. 14).

At this point the teacher should read the *Syllabus*, pp. 92, par. 3, and 93, par. 4, with pp. 100-7. The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds came much later in the development of the Church but they were not accretions: they were corporate efforts of the whole Church to express in the thought and language of that time what the earliest Christians meant when they said "Jesus is Lord"—no more and no less. We to-day must surely mean the same, however we express it.

Foundations of Faith. We have already studied the facts about Jesus proclaimed by the apostles to Jew and Gentile, from Jerusalem to Rome, and preserved in the Gospels. Here we see why these facts constituted a gospel—good news for all men everywhere (Acts xvii. 30, 31). Contact with the facts had produced upheaval and transformation, intellectual, moral and spiritual, in the lives of these men, who were not theologians propounding theories but witnesses, testifying to events and to an emancipating experience.

On THE CROSS Jesus laid down His life (John x. 17-

18) in loyalty and love to God and man, and so to righteousness and truth (John xiv. 30, xvi. 11). This self-sacrificial act was the climax and summary of all that Jesus was, taught and did in making the nature and purpose of God known and manifesting the Kingdom of God. The Jew sought moral and religious rectitude, but, like Paul, was perpetually defeated by sin (Rom. vii. 7-25). The power of God to overcome sin was revealed in the Cross, where the suffering of love in allegiance to truth proved triumphant; sin could not defeat it. The tragedy of the Jew was that, absorbed in the expectation that God would manifest His power in a glorious, world-ruling Messiah such as the apocalyptists described (p. 143), he resisted (despite Isa. liii and the other Songs of the Suffering Servant) the thought of a crucified Messiah. The Greek desired to understand the whole universe; his tragedy was that (despite the plays of Æschylus, for example, or what Plato had said about the probability that men would crucify the truly wise man, *Republic*, Bk. II, § 362) he did not see its meaning in a Teacher whose philosophy brought upon Him the death of a slave and a criminal: yet this was the inexhaustible wisdom of God (1 Cor. ii. 6-16; Rom. xi. 33). To believe this, said Paul, was not enough. One must identify oneself with it, and live by it at the same kind of cost as Jesus Himself, whether or not such living ended in execution (Gal. ii. 20, vi. 14; Acts xxi. 13, xxv. 11; cf. the challenge uttered by Jesus, Mark viii. 34, x. 21, and see p. 39). This was involved in accepting Jesus as Lord. Only faith could rise to it. (See also pp. 39-64.)

The Resurrection.—The Historic Fact: 1 Cor. xv. 1-11 is the earliest record we have of the appearances of Jesus after His resurrection. It was the APPEARANCES OF JESUS, even more than the open tomb, which convinced the disciples that He whom they had seen

crucified was alive (Acts i. 3). It was upon the appearance of Jesus to him that Paul based his own apostleship and message (1 Cor. ix. 1-2). We know nothing more of the appearance to above five hundred brethren at once, but it helps to explain the strength and conviction of the primitive Church (Acts i. 15).

Paul recites (1 Cor. xv. 3-4) what was evidently an accepted outline of the Christian faith, in fact a **PRIMITIVE CREED**; cf. Acts x. 37-42. 1 Cor. xv. 19-21 is part of a double argument: (a) that the resurrection of Christ guarantees the resurrection of Christians, who are as much one with Him by faith and love as He (in His human personality) and they are one with the whole human race in subjection to physical death; (b) that if resurrection is in itself an impossibility (according to the Greeks and the Sadducees) the whole Christian Gospel must be an illusion. The life, teaching and death of Jesus do not alone suffice to give us the good news which created the Church and forms her message to mankind: in itself the Cross made Jesus no more than a martyr (1 Cor. xv. 17). The saving power of God was manifest in raising Jesus from the dead and thereby proving that the holy love of God has triumphed over sin and death (Rom. v. 21, vi. 6-11; 2 Tim. i. 10). This is the significance of "wherefore," in Phil. ii. 9.

"Peter and the apostles" (Acts v. 29-32) begin their brief summary of the Christian teaching and witness with "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus."

This needs emphasis because many people who find no explanation of the *mode* of Christ's resurrection convincing are apt therefore to ignore or deny the *fact*. But the two are not inseparable (cf. the Incarnation, p. 159). Whether we accept this or that attempt at a theory, or whether we recognise that the mode must remain a profound mystery, the fact belongs to the

essence of the Christian witness concerning what God has done among men. If we are content to end the story of Jesus with the Cross we cannot claim that we are teaching what the Apostles taught, or that we can account for the origin of the Christian Church (p. 69).

The New Power. A great example enlightens and inspires us but this power (*dunamis*, "dynamic") which Paul found in the knowledge of Jesus Christ is something more. It was literally the living energy of God at work in Jesus that accounted for His character, words and deeds, finally triumphing on the Cross and in the tomb. Only by this living energy, imparted to us by the Spirit of God, manifest in the Spirit of Jesus, known to us in our experience as the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. ii. 4, vi. 17; 2 Cor. iii. 17; Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 9-14), are we enabled to "walk even as He walked" (1 John ii. 6). This is what Paul means when he says: "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. ii. 16), and "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20) or "Christ in you" (Col. i. 27). "That I may know" means that the knowledge is not achieved cheaply or once for all: it increases as we not only dwell upon the historical facts and worship Jesus Christ as Lord but also identify ourselves wholly with Christ's cause (Phil. iii. 10).

The New Life. This is experienced here and now (Rom. vi. 4). For Paul it meant freedom (Rom. vii. 24-viii. 6), courage and endurance (cf. the great tale of his adventures, 2 Cor. xi. 23-30), and love that never fails (1 Cor. xiii. 1-8). Practical Christianity in everyday life is not a matter of keeping rules but of maintaining this personal relationship with God as we know Him in Jesus Christ (Gal. ii. 20). Col. iii. 5-17 makes concrete iii. 1-4, which might otherwise seem a piece of mysticism beyond ordinary folk. Paul is in fact dealing quite realistically with the daily problem of living with other people.

Pentecost. For the event and the “tongues,” see p. 71. The first Christians, who as Jews already worshipped and served “the God of their fathers” (Acts xxiv. 14) as Creator, Lord, and giver of the Covenant, came to a new awareness of Him as self-revealed in Jesus (Heb. i. 1-3) and self-imparting in the Holy Spirit (Acts ii. 16-17). They were called by Jesus Christ to follow Him, seeking first the Kingdom of God (John xxi. 22; Luke xii. 31), and sent to proclaim the Gospel to all men (Acts i. 8, xxvi. 16-18). *As they obeyed*, they found within themselves power, sometimes expressed in miracles (“signs”: Acts iv. 29-31, v. 12-16; Rom. xv. 19), but even more manifest in moral courage and endurance (Eph. iii. 16; Col. i. 11; Acts xxvi. 22), illumination and guidance (Acts xv. 28, xvi. 6-8), and the spirit of love, joy and peace (Gal. v. 22; Eph. v. 9). They recognised that this was akin to what they had seen in Jesus, and spoke of it therefore as the life and spirit of Christ at work in them, the Holy Spirit of God transforming their lives into the likeness of His (2 Cor. iii. 17-18). The *doctrine* of the Holy Spirit as distinguishable from, yet one with, the Father and the Son in the eternal being of the Triune God was not formulated by the Church till later (p. 252; see *Syllabus*, pp. 79-80), but the Church itself lived by the experience of the Spirit’s activity, and has continued to do so ever since. For a clear and practical explanation of this in relation to our own time see F. A. Cockin, *The Holy Spirit and the Church* (S.C.M. Press, 1s.).

It must be made very clear to pupils that the Holy Spirit is God at work in our personalities—body, mind, and spirit—to bring about in thought and feeling, character and action what the life and teaching of Jesus make us love and desire, but that this is not automatic: we must respond, obey, in “the spirit of Sonship” (Rom. viii. 14-16; Gal. iv. 6. Contrast Eph. ii. 2).

(b) *The Corporate worship of the Church.* Worship was not a mere matter of "services," but was constantly related to the whole business of living, as the passages in the *Syllabus* clearly show. The growth of character in action was part of the "living sacrifice" perpetually offered to God (Rom. xii. 1; Phil. iv. 18). On "the prayers" (Acts ii. 42) see p. 73. "Growth unto salvation" (1 Pet. ii. 2) is an important phrase. Salvation ultimately means wholeness of life and rightness of relationship to God: it is not achieved in a moment (though conversion may be sudden), or once for all, but is a process (cf. "us which are being saved," 1 Cor. i. 18). Paul puts it quite clearly (Eph. iv. 13-15; "unto a full-grown man" must certainly not be missed: Phil. iii. 12-14). Men came to know about Jesus Christ (2 Pet. iii. 18) from those who had lived with Him (Acts i. 21-2), later from hearing the Gospels read, and always their knowledge of Him grew by their spiritual communion with Him (p. 256). The grace they received in Him was the undeserved loving-kindness of God (John i. 16-17), but the word grace may in addition convey a sense of the well-proportioned and harmoniously active completeness of His manhood.

Baptism (see pp. 18, 252), the rite of admission to the Church, symbolised cleansing and dedication to a new life; it meant acceptance of Jesus as Lord and "the answer of a good conscience towards God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. iii. 21), and unity with Christ in the Spirit, whether experienced after baptism (Acts ii. 38) or before (Acts x. 47; cf. xv. 7-10). Faith was obviously essential (Acts viii. 12—though R.V. omits viii. 37). "To understand the importance attached to Baptism we must picture the rite performed not upon the baby of Christian parents but upon a convert coming into the Church from a pagan world. It is then obviously no bare symbol, but a solemn

expression of faith" (Bishop Hunkin, in *The Christian Religion, its Origin and Progress*, I, p. 185). But apparently whole households were baptised (Acts xvi. 33) as a natural consequence when the parents were converted. On the other hand Christian parents were exhorted to bring up their little ones "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. vi. 4). This naturally led to the practice of requiring god-parents to undertake responsibility for baptised children until they were old enough to make vows for themselves at confirmation.

The method of baptism might be sprinkling, pouring water upon the head (affusion), or plunging beneath the surface of the water. Rom. vi. 4 and Col. ii. 12 refer to the latter but Paul uses the imagery quite differently in 1 Cor. xii. 13, and in 1 Cor. i. 13-16 he warns converts against supposing that baptism *in itself* has any magical efficacy or that it should be administered only by those of apostolic status (1 Cor. i. 17; cf. John iv. 1-2). Note the phrase in Eph. iv. 4 f.—"One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

On the Lord's Supper see pp. 58, 247 and Justin Martyr's account, *Syllabus*, p. 82, where also the *Didache* prayer of thanksgiving is quoted. The *agapé* was a meal of religious fellowship (cf. the Hebrew *Kiddûsh*, p. 58), which at first seems to have culminated in the Lord's Supper (so, possibly, at Troas, Acts xx. 7-11), but by the end of the second century was separated from it (cf. 1 Cor. xi. 20, 34—though such excesses were probably rare).

For "the church in the house," see p. 196.

(c) *The Corporate Life of the Church*. Acts iv. 32-7 may imply only that the wealthier members contributed as occasion arose to the needs of others through the agency of the apostles (cf. p. 73). Ananias' sin (Acts v. 1-11) was not that he gave only part of the price but that he professed falsely to give the whole. Note that Peter did

not "strike Ananias dead": his death may have been from fear, like Uzza's (1 Chron. xiii. 10) when he broke a tabu. These stories are not in the *Syllabus* but older boys and girls are often puzzled by them and may ask questions. They are more likely to ask about Christian communism: whatever was done in the Jerusalem Church was a spontaneous outcome of Christian brotherliness (Acts iv. 34-5) and had in time to be regulated (Acts vi. 1-6), but it was not the application of an economic system, which may or may not be Christian. The "collection" (cf. p. 201) was another instance of unity achieved by looking not upon one's own things but upon the things of others (Phil. ii. 4; cf. Rom. xii. 13; 1 John iii. 17).

On unity, see p. 247.

III. THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

1. *The Evangelisation of the Roman Empire.*

Secular writers begin to take notice of Christianity just at the point (about A.D. 100) where the New Testament documents (except perhaps 1 and 2 Timothy and 2 Peter) cease. We have noticed Luke's care to record the repeated judgment of Roman officials that Christians were entitled to the protection of the law so long as they did not create disturbance or preach sedition. Thus, despite Jewish antagonism and pagan mob-violence, the Gospel was carried not only to Rome but also, especially by converted Jews and proselytes of the Dispersion, far and wide through the Empire.

2. *The Persecution of the Church by the Empire.*

Persecution developed in the reign of Nero (A.D. 54-68). It was connected in part with the growing rebelliousness of the Jews in Palestine, which ended in protracted war (cf. Josephus), the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), and the final extinction of Jewish national

independence—but in part also with the general unsettlement caused by Nero's tyranny and cruelty. The Emperor was suspected of responsibility for the great fire which occurred at Rome. "To stifle the report Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations. The populace called them Christians. Christ, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and for a time the mischievous superstition was checked." Thus Tacitus (*Annals*, XV, 44), who says further that Christianity soon "broke out again" and "In the first place some were seized, and confessed. Then on their evidence a vast multitude was convicted not so much of arson as of hatred of the human race." They were "not only put to death, but put to death with insult, in that they were dressed up in the skins of beasts to perish by the worrying of dogs, or else put on crosses to be set on fire, and when the daylight failed to be burnt for use as lights by night." Even those who thought them "mischievous," pitied them because "they were not destroyed for the good of the State but to satisfy the cruelty of an individual." Tradition says that at this time Peter was crucified and Paul beheaded.

Well-meaning Governors were perplexed. Pliny wrote from Bithynia to the Emperor Trajan (A.D. 98–117) for instructions and was told not to hunt Christians down but to punish them if they disobeyed imperial orders. There were rumours about the reason why Christians (driven to worship in such places as the catacombs) met in secret, allegations of immorality and even of cannibalism in the sacred meal. But the vital issue was Emperor-worship. Julius Cæsar had been accorded divine honours after his death and subsequent Emperors while they were still alive. Domitian (81–96), under whom the second great persecution arose,

ordered that everyone should burn a pinch of incense before the Emperor's statue at festival times or as a test of loyalty when charged with seditious speech or behaviour. This was part of an effort to unify the Empire: "A single State had been created out of a multiplicity of States. But to this vast commonwealth one thing was lacking, for to the ancient mind there could be no true nation without a national religion . . . in the person of their god the people who worshipped him could feel themselves to be one. . . . The problem was now solved . . . by a decree that the State itself, as represented by its head, should be the object of worship" (E. F. Scott, *The Book of Revelation*, p. 37). Rome still tolerated other religions so long as their adherents would still perform this ritual act which to most people seemed formal and harmless. The Christians, however, could call no one "Lord" but Jesus (p. 209). "The ordinary pagan religions were false; this one was not only false, but was the negation of all religion. It openly declared that the State, which existed solely for this world, was the ultimate good" (E. F. Scott, pp. 38-9). The same situation has arisen to-day in several countries.

The Church grew stronger under persecution. The letters of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, suggest something like a cult of martyrdom, and the stories of Blandina the slave-girl, Perpetua and Felicitas, and many others, reveal the fortitude with which maidens and young mothers as well as youths and men suffered death "for the Name," in the arena or in other forms. Tertullian could write, rhetorically but not without justification: "We are men of yesterday, yet we have filled all your resorts, your cities, islands, fortresses, towns, market-places, the very camp—the palace, the senate, the forum. We have left you only your temples!" (See P. Gardner Smith, in *The Christian Religion*, II, p. 25.)

Decius (249–251) renewed the attack on the Church through an edict requiring everyone in the Empire to perform the prescribed rites by a given day on pain of arrest, torture, and perhaps death. Valerian (253–260) issued edicts aimed at the clergy and at Christians of civil or military rank, while also he confiscated the property of Christians. But Diocletian in 303 outdid all but Nero, ordering the destruction of Christian churches and Scriptures, the arrest of clergy, and death for all who refused to sacrifice.

3. *Victory of the Church.*

Constantine, proclaimed Emperor by the legions at York in 306, subdued all his rivals but Licinius, with whom he issued in 313 the Edict of Milan, specifically guaranteeing restitution and toleration to Christians, though people of other religions were also to be free to practise them. Constantine became sole emperor in 323 and professed Christianity, though he postponed Baptism (as many did, fearing that they might commit mortal sin after they had been baptised) until shortly before his death in 337. Under him the Empire became at least nominally Christian and the great Council of Nicæa was held in 325.

During these three centuries the organisation, thought and worship of the Church developed greatly. Apologists like Justin Martyr and Tertullian, scholars like Clement of Alexandria and Origen, administrators like Cyprian, theologians like Irenæus, saints and martyrs such as Ignatius and Polycarp, belong to that time. Excellent sketches of this impressive and inspiring history will be found in such books as *The Christian Religion, Its Origin and Progress*, Vols. I and II (Macmillan, 7s. 6d. each) and *An Outline of Church History* (Broadcast Talks: Allen and Unwin, 4 vols., 2s. 6d. each). Cf. also Moffatt, *The First Five Centuries*

of the Church (London University Press, 6s.). The background at the end of the first century is vividly presented in E. F. Scott's *The Book of Revelation* (S.C.M. Press, 6s.). For other books see *Syllabus*, pp. 148-9.

The value of Hebrews, Revelation and 1 and 2 Peter is little diminished by our uncertainty as to who wrote them and who were the original recipients. Hebrews has been attributed to Barnabas, Priscilla, Apollos, Silvanus, Luke and others. T. W. Manson maintains that Apollos wrote it between A.D. 58 and 66, at about the same time as Paul wrote Colossians (cf. p. 267) and to meet similar difficulties in churches in Asia where Apollos had worked: "Heb. v-x is devoted to proving that the Jewish ritual system is superseded by the high-priestly work of Christ, and Heb. i-iv is concerned with proving the uniqueness and supremacy of Christ as against all other intermediaries" (*A Companion to the Bible*, pp. 113-14). As Romans deals with the Law, so Hebrews deals with worship and sacrifice. In so far as it refers to the persecution of the Church and encourages Christians (e.g. Heb. xi), it must relate to the persecution under Nero.

It is even less credible that the Apostle John wrote Revelation than that Paul wrote Hebrews. Apparently a Christian prophet (cf. 1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11) exiled (perhaps from Ephesus) in time of persecution (probably under Domitian), wrote messages of rebuke and encouragement to churches in the Lycus valley (see p. 202) and then used the language and method of existing Jewish apocalypses (cf. p. 143) to denounce the imperial oppressor and to quicken faith in God not only as reigning in eternal glory but as triumphant here and now in His saints and martyrs. He declares that whatever the present power of materialism and pagan imperialism it cannot last, for God must and will exert His lordship, if His people are faithful, to

overthrow sin and establish righteousness. The book contains profound truths applicable in all ages, and not least in our own (cf. E. F. Scott, *op. cit.*) though only a perverted ingenuity can find in it prognostications of specific events in our own or other times.

1 Peter may possibly have been written by the Apostle from Rome, before Nero's persecution, to "the Christians in five provinces of Asia Minor" (T. W. Manson, *Companion*, p. 118). Most scholars regard 1 Peter as genuinely Petrine (written, perhaps, with the help of Silvanus; cf. p. 194), whereas 2 Peter is generally thought to have been written nearly a century later.

FOURTH YEAR: 14+

IV. THE APOSTOLIC PREACHING

Having traced the growth of the Church as a living community we are now better able to understand the message that she proclaimed to the world. We must necessarily use much of the same material as in the 13+ year, but from another standpoint.

A generation ago certain scholars maintained that the Synoptic Gospels show Jesus as He really was, 'a simple prophet of Nazareth, who "went about doing good and healing . . . for God was with Him" (Acts x. 38), but that the writings of Paul and John are theological elaborations, perplexing and even false. To-day we have been told by the more extreme Form-critics that even the Synoptic Gospels portray, not the actual facts, but an idealised figure created by the inevitable tendency of adoring disciples to exaggerate as they looked back upon their experiences.

Fearless and careful study, however, has convinced most competent scholars that the Gospels are substantially accurate. By the facts thus recorded the Christian message stands or falls, and among them the

early followers of "the Way" laid chief stress upon His death and resurrection as explaining the transformation of their own lives (cf. Acts i. 22, iv. 12-13). This, as the Form-critics have shown, was the first part of the story of Jesus to take definite oral and written form, and the Gospels devote more of their space to it than to any other (cf. Martin Dibelius, *Gospel Criticism and Christology*, pp. 18, 42, 55). The stories of what He said and did during His ministry were told because they explained what manner of man He was who thus died and rose again, and why, therefore, His death was peculiarly significant.

In *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (Hodder and Stoughton, 5s.—a book which all teachers should read), C. H. Dodd demonstrates that the teaching of Paul and "John" is fundamentally the same as the preaching of the apostles between Pentecost and the beginning of Paul's mission (cf. Peter's sermons in Acts), and as the presentation of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. This section of the *Syllabus* brings out their agreement, and also shows how "the primitive Church, in proclaiming its Gospel to the world, offered its own fellowship and experience as the realisation of the Gospel" (*The Apostolic Preaching*, pp. 175, 135; Dodd's section on "The History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," in *A Companion to the Bible*, pp. 390-417, is of great value to the teacher).

A. The Fulfilment of Jewish Hopes.

(i) For Mark viii. 29, see p. 37. Rom. xv. 8 and 2 Cor. i. 19-20 are more easily understood in Moffatt's or Goodspeed's rendering. Jesus not only fulfils the prophecies of a MESSIAH: He is final.

(ii) In Rom. viii. 3 and Phil. ii. 6-10 Paul declares that Christ was Son of God from all eternity. In Rom. i. 4, "It is probable that Paul is citing more or less

exactly a common CONFESSION OF FAITH which would be known and recognised at Rome. The statement is pre-theological. It attests the fact that Jesus was a real man, that He was acknowledged as Messiah, and that after His resurrection, though not before, He was worshipped as Son of God. These are THE FACTS which it was the task of Christian theology to explain" (Dodd, "Moffatt Commentary," *Romans*, pp. 4 f.).

(iii) On the "Servant Songs," see p. 124.

(iv) Isa. xlii. 1-4 is the first of the Servant Songs: "This interpretation [i.e. in the four Songs] of innocent suffering is the chief contribution of the Old Testament to the solution of the greatest problem in Israel's religion. For the Christian it is the clearest anticipation of Christ and His Cross" (Wheeler Robinson, *The Old Testament*, p. 110). The Jews accounted Jesus' insistence that "the Messiah must suffer" incompatible with belief in God's glorious promise (Mark viii. 29-34; Luke xxiv. 25-6; 1 Cor. i. 23). Acts x. 43 does not mean that the Prophets foresaw and foretold either Jesus or Calvary, but that anyone who knew their teachings and then heard the story of Jesus ought to have recognised that He was the expected Messiah.

B. The Lord Jesus Christ.

(i) For the LORDSHIP of Jesus, see p. 251. In Rom. x. 6-9 Paul freely interprets Deut. xxx. 12-14, and insists that faith is living trust in a living Lord, not mere intellectual acceptance of a belief.

(ii) Phil. ii. 6-10 is one of the most magnificent and profound passages in Paul's letters. For the various theories of the INCARNATION which have been based upon it see "Moffatt Commentary," *Philippians*, pp. 83-97. The central thought is that of Divine self-giving without stint, self-limitation without qualification, and self-submission to the worst that men could

do, in order that the will of men to do evil should itself be overcome, and transformed into a spirit of sonship and service in the Kingdom of God. Of CRUCIFIXION Cicero wrote (*In Verrem*, 5, 66), "To bind a Roman citizen is an outrage; to scourge him a crime; it almost amounts to parricide to put him to death; how shall I describe crucifixion? No adequate word can be found to represent so execrable an enormity." Crucifixion was the form of death reserved by Romans for rebels, criminals and slaves. Jews regarded it with peculiar horror as traditionally accursed (Gal. iii. 13; Deut. xxi. 23). 2 Cor. viii. 9 states the same truth concerning Jesus in a simpler form reminiscent of the Gospels. The "Name above every name," is perhaps "Lord."

COLOSSIANS was written (probably from Rome, cf. p. 211) to a church in the Lycus valley which Paul had not founded (i. 4, 8; ii. 1). Chapters i and ii stress the sufficiency of CHRIST AS MEDIATOR between God and man. Colossian Christians had been tempted to add Jewish elaborations (perhaps ritual) to their faith, and to combine with it some of the Gnostic and philosophical ideas then current. These, assuming that matter was the source of evil, interposed a series of beings, each more spiritual than the one before it, between man and God, the pure and absolute Spirit. Col. i. 15 means not only that Jesus is like God but that God is like Jesus—the Divine nature is expressed in and through the human personality. Col. i. 16 asserts that the meaning of the whole creation is found in Jesus: everything "holds together" (makes sense, as it were) in that wisdom, power and love of God which Jesus embodied (cf. Luke xvii. 21; 1 Cor. i. 22-5). The Gospel is one of incarnation and redemption (i. 18-20); there is no wisdom or knowledge above and beyond it, as the Gnostics asserted, and neither moral rules nor ascetic practices are effectual substitutes

for it (ii. 3-23). A man who knows and serves Christ loses both fear of and dependence upon the angels and spirits, beneficent or malevolent, so widely believed in at that time (i. 16; ii. 8, 15, 20). "Rudiments of the world" means elements, or perhaps elemental spirits. "Mystery" (i. 26-7) means something in due time to be disclosed, not another "mystery religion."

THE PROLOGUE TO THE FOURTH GOSPEL (John i. 1-18) is more than a rather academic effort to link the Christian faith with the ideas prominent in Jewish wisdom literature (p. 138) or with prevailing pagan philosophies. In both of these the term *Logos* (translated "word") was frequently used to indicate creative wisdom or a formative principle. "Word" here stands for the self-utterance of God. The heart of the Prologue is in i. 14; "flesh" there means, as the Nicene Creed says, "man"—human personality. The writer is not offering explanations, but stating at the outset the supreme fact which is the theme of his whole Gospel. From the beginning of the world God has been the giver of life and light. He spoke through the Law and the Prophets (of whom John the Baptist was the last). But He is invisible. Jesus Christ is eternally related to Him as Son to Father. Coming among men as man Jesus is more than God's messenger. God speaks *in* Him, not merely through Him (cf. Heb. i. 2), for He *is* the Word of God. He makes God known ("declares Him") in person. The life of God (grace and truth) flows through Him to men, and those who accept Him for what He is find themselves entering upon a new life, sharing in ever increasing measure what God gives without measure, and aware of their sonship of God as something which He bestows but they could not achieve by racial inheritance or exercise of human will (cf. John iii. 3-9; cf. p. 188).

This is not theory, but testimony to what the disciples

("we") had in fact found in Jesus. It is the reason why they called Him Lord. The Prologue (to which 1 John i. 1-4 is a parallel) announces the writer's standpoint, and makes it easy to see why he takes so different a line from Mark (cf. "the Messianic Secret," p. 19). He has "so presented the 'sensible' history of Jesus that his readers are confronted in that history, and precisely there, with what is beyond time and beyond visible occurrence, with the veritable Word of God and with the veritable life of eternity" (Hoskyns, *Fourth Gospel*, i. 4: teachers should if possible read i. 129-35). The Prologue is in fact more akin to Col. i and ii than to the birth and childhood stories of Matthew and Luke.

C. What Jesus has Done.

(i) God is invisible. But if Jesus is so closely related to God, sharing the Divine nature, that we can only express the truth in personal terms by speaking of Him as SON OF GOD, what He was and did as a man among men must be an expression of God's own nature and activity (Matt. xi. 25-30; John xiv. 10-11). The love manifest by Jesus is the love of God (Rom. v. 8). It becomes active in and through us towards others (1 John iv. 16). The light and life of God in Jesus Christ which are the gifts of God's love to us transform us by reinforcing and redirecting all our energies, but also we see the whole world differently and live in it as free, creative persons (Acts xxvi. 19; Mark ii. 21-2; Rom. vi. 4, vii. 6).

(ii) (a) By "WORLD" John means all men individually, not simply "humanity" in the collective sense which is almost impersonal; individual response is essential (cf. Mark vi. 2; John v. 40; Mark x. 22; John i. 11, vi. 67). To "perish" is to disappear, waste away, come to nothing, whereas to "have eternal life" is to possess *now* a moral and spiritual quality of life

which, because it comes from God, is also "the power of an endless life" (Heb. vii. 16, A.V. marg. indissoluble; 2 Cor. iv. 10-11). The imagery of THE SHEPHERD was familiar in psalmist and prophet (Ps. xxiii; "Shepherd of Israel" in Ps. lxxx. 1; Isa. xl. 11, xlv. 28; Ezek. xxxiv). The early Christians, under persecution, found new meaning in it, as drawings on the walls of the catacombs indicate. With the use of it here, cf. Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 25. But only here is the emphasis laid upon the Good Shepherd's voluntary sacrifice of His own life in active conflict with the "evil things" that would otherwise have destroyed His sheep (John x. 11, 15-16; cf. Matt. xxvi. 31). It is a mistake to present the Fourth Gospel as a book of quietistic mystical meditations. The Eastern shepherd must be prepared to overcome the ferocity of hungry beasts and lawless men (cf. David, 1 Sam. xvii. 34-6), but our conventional pictures always portray a scene of idyllic peace. Jesus is REDEEMER because God in Him takes the initiative for the deliverance and restoration of men (Rom. v. 8). For "propitiation" see p. 243.

Paul always says that men must be reconciled to God (cf. 2 Cor. v. 18-20; Col. i. 20), never the reverse.

(b) The VICTORY OF THE CROSS was won once and for all on Calvary (cf. p. 64). Yet it has to be won again in every man's own heart, for men are turned from their sin only when they see it as the same in principle as that of the men who betrayed, condemned and crucified Jesus (John xv. 21-4; xvi. 9; Heb. vi. 6), and therefore can say "He loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Gal. ii. 20) as He did for them. In this He carried out the purpose of God, which is what Heb. v. 8-9 means by His obedience—at incalculable cost.

On Isa. liii, see p. 125, and on Mark xiv, xv, p. 55. The writer to the Hebrews (p. 263) quotes the Septuagint version of the O.T., which is not always exact,

and sometimes his quotation is connected with his argument only by a single word (e.g. "children," in ii. 13). We understand him more easily if we keep to his main points, which are similar to Paul's in Phil. ii. 5-11; Col. i. 13-20 (cf. John i. 16-18). Heb. ii. 9-18 follows closely upon i. 1-ii. 18: Jesus is the unique and supreme Son in whom God has uttered Himself and through whom "God made the worlds" (cf. the Prologue to John, p. 268). Even the angels, the highest of created spirits, therefore worship and serve Him whose authority is everlasting (i. 8). But Jesus, who in His eternal sonship lacked nothing that belongs to the nature of God, for a time took a lower station than they when, as Saviour of men, He lived a human life and His SAVIOURHOOD was fulfilled ("made perfect," Heb. ii. 10) in His self-identification with suffering and His victory over sin and death. ("For every man," ii. 9, does not mean instead of, but rather "which is every man's lot".) Thus (ii. 14) He is able from within to succour ("take hold of," ii. 16) and deliver all men.

Jewish sacrifices prescribed by the Law were symbolic of self-surrender, in recognition of God's claims, but they might too easily be regarded as payment of a forfeit for having sinned, or might be offered insincerely (cf. Mic. vi. 7-8). The self-dedication of Jesus to the fulfilment of God's purpose (Heb. x. 1-9) was the reality symbolised by sacrifices, and in this men participate who identify themselves with Him by faith and love (cf. 1 Pet. ii. 21-4). In this way men can here and now share daily in that victory over sin which takes away the fear of breaking God's law and the dread of death (1 Cor. xv. 55-8). To "follow His steps" (1 Pet. ii. 21-5) is in fact to "live the triumphant life" (1 John ii. 14).

(c) ATONEMENT (Heb. x. 19-25; see p. 244) is a word akin to reconciliation (p. 270). It has nothing to do

with paying the penalty of another's sin so that he may escape punishment. It *does* involve the suffering by the innocent of the consequences of others' sins; but the innocent cannot be *punished* instead of the guilty. "Christ suffered, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). In this the self-offering of Jesus is in truth priestly, for He is the perpetual mediator, uniting in His own person the divine and the human. "The blood of Jesus" (Heb. x. 19) recalls the two Covenants, Old and New, sealed by sacrifice; "it is the blood that maketh atonement, for the life is in it" (Lev. xvii. 11). Not death as such but the spending of life to the uttermost is the cost of reconciliation. Heb. x. 22 connects the old symbolism with the new baptism. "The day" (x. 25) means that "end of the age" and speedy return of Christ to the earth for which Christians still looked (cf. 1 and 2 Thessalonians). For 2 Cor. v. 14-19, see p. 244.

(d) OUR RESURRECTION. See pp. 253 f. Corinthian Christians, with a background of Greek rather than Jewish ideas, still tended to doubt the reasonableness of resurrection for themselves and others even though they believed that by the stupendous miracle of raising Him from the dead God had vindicated Jesus, and had proved the acceptability of the sacrifice that Jesus had made for sinners. Paul's reply appeals to logic (1 Cor. xv. 13-17) and to the very elements of the Gospel (xv. 1-5; cf. Peter's summary, Acts x. 36-43, and Acts i. 22). If resurrection is in fact impossible, then the impossibility must apply to Jesus: but if God has not raised Him and in the nature of things could not do so, He remains no more than a great example and a martyr (cf. p. 254). The good news about victory over sin disappears because the power that overcomes death is the same that casts out sin. But there is evidence that Christ did rise (xv. 5-9), and with assurance of

that fact comes the glorious certainty of God's reign, both in this life and after it, which turns all the risks of following Christ from folly into a magnificent adventure (xv. 30-2; cf. xv. 56-8). xv. 29 points to the belief that those who had died without being baptised might gain the benefits of baptism if their friends were baptised for them. xv. 32b-34, 57-8 contrasts the moral slackness of those who take short views of life with the vigour and tenacity of those who hold the *Christian* belief in life beyond death.

Paul dismisses, as betraying materialistic ideas, quibbling questions about reviving dead bodies (cf. p. 199). A BODY, he says, is a means of self-expression and a spiritual world demands a spiritual, not a material, body. God's wisdom is already sufficiently manifest in this world (1 Cor. xv. 38) for us to trust it and believe that after death we shall, if we are Christ's, live on as real and complete persons. The heritage of life in Christ is what matters (1 Cor. xv. 45; cf. 1 John iii. 1-3 and see p. 270).

D. God's Transforming Work Through the Holy Spirit.

(i) ON PENTECOST (Acts ii), see pp. 70 f. Though no formal doctrine of THE HOLY SPIRIT and His relationship to the Father and the Son is set forth in the N.T., Acts and the Epistles afford ample evidence that God the Spirit was as real in the daily experience of Christians as God the Father and God the Son. They spoke of Him as "Christ in you," "the Spirit of Jesus," "the Lord, the Spirit," "the Spirit of God," "the Holy Spirit." The biologist knows life only by what life *does*, though he cannot isolate it, analyse it, or create it. So the Christian knows the reality and power of the Spirit by what He does—by the "fruit" or outcome of His indwelling energies in the form of character, conduct, conscience, moral and spiritual illumination and intuition.

Extravagances and vagaries are checked by comparison with the life of Jesus Himself (1 John iv. 1; 1 Cor. i. 10, ii. 16). His parables make the truth clear (Matt. vii. 16-27, xxv. 31-46). Paul summarises it in Rom. viii. 9, 14.

THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT are not abstract virtues: Gal. v. 22 is distilled from an abundance of concrete examples such as the *Syllabus* quotes. It is obscured if we repeat glibly the list of "fruits of the Spirit" without thinking of practical instances in the N.T. or in our own experience, and admire men and women who exhibit faith, courage, courtesy and the rest without remembering the source of these qualities. The spirit and manners of a gentleman are acquired not by assiduous imitation, but by frequent intercourse with those who possess them. Companionship with Jesus Christ in thought and prayer is the only secret of the Christian character which these passages illustrate.

THE HEROES OF FAITH (Heb. xi.-xii. 2) whose stories were the great heritage of Jewish youth should stir boys and girls to recollection of those who, in the name of Christ, have carried on the great adventure through the ages, and are doing so in our day. For the meaning of faith, see p. 24. "The reproach of Christ" (xi. 26) is an obvious anachronism: "something better" (xi. 40) is the complete revelation in Jesus.

LOVE, in "St. Paul's Portrait of Christ" (1 Cor. xiii) is the N.T. word *agapé*, not the emotion (largely sensuous) of the classical *erôs*: it is the settled quest of the well-being of others regardless of cost to oneself (cf. John xv. 12-13). Comparison of A.V. with Moffatt or Goodspeed helps us to understand how practical were Paul's words, especially when we remember that they were written to people at Corinth (pp. 200-5; cf. Matt. v. 44; Luke vi. 27, 35). If we recall Paul's experiences at the places from which and to which he

wrote his letters we shall appreciate more fully the illustrations of joy, courage, peace and fellowship to which the *Syllabus* refers. For Philemon, see p. 211.

(ii) THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH in the New Testament reflects the experience of Christians who had found community in their common relationship to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord (see p. 185). Of necessity this fellowship gradually became organised (p. 279), but it was (and is) a living organism (1 Cor. xii), a body animated by one Spirit and controlled by the one Head, Jesus Christ (Eph. iv. 4-6); it was not just another religious organisation. However mystical an idea this might seem, the Church was, as it remains, an extremely practical and necessary fact. God must have means of reaching those who have not heard of Christ and the Kingdom, or have not yet made Jesus Lord (Rom. x. 12-15). Men and women are social as well as individual in their inmost being. It is psychologically impossible for them to worship and serve Christ adequately or grow to the fulness of the measure of His stature in isolation. All attempts to do so have ended in weakness and failure. Churchless Christianity is unknown to the New Testament; the present-day tendency to suppose that it is possible is ultimately fatal to the individuals concerned. The school cannot be a Church any more than it can be a family in any but a derivative and metaphorical sense. In State schools we cannot advocate membership of one branch of the Church rather than another or inculcate its distinctive tenets and practices. But ALL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES AGREE about the greater part of Christian truth, e.g. belief in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the Incarnation, Cross and Resurrection of Christ; the salvation of men by repentance, faith and communion with God. We cannot teach the Bible with objective fidelity unless we teach these truths, embedded in it.

But it is equally true that the Bible is misinterpreted and the common belief of all Christian denominations, ignored unless children are made aware in the course of Scripture teaching that discipleship of Christ and loyalty to Him involves membership of the Church through one or other of the Christian communions.

In 1 Cor. xii Paul shows how valuable are DIFFERENCES OF GIFT AND MINISTRATION, provided that these spring from the infinite richness of the life of God and are varied expressions of the one Spirit (xii. 3-5). Again we should remember the circumstances which evoked Paul's letter (1 Cor. i. 10-17, iii. 1-9). The principle of life is UNITY IN DIFFERENCE, as Paul's figure of the body and its members indicates. This leaves us to-day without excuse for remaining outside the organised Church on the ground that the churches do not all worship, or formulate their beliefs, precisely alike; their very variety makes it possible for all normal people to find a true intellectual and spiritual affinity with one or other of them, and through it with the whole Body of Christ. But neither is there excuse for any Church to claim that it alone possesses genuine authority or preserves the essentials of Christian faith and worship. It is not Christian to maintain any divisions which are artificial and unnecessary (1 Cor. xii. 15 f.; i. 10). The test of a Church in relation to the Body of Christ is whether it lives by the spirit of 1 Cor. xii and xiii.

For EPHESIANS, see p. 211. It is in effect a tract upon the life, work and message of the Church in general. In i. 23 the Church is described not only as the body which finds unity in Christ as Head, but as the fulness of Him "who fulfils for Himself all things," i.e. brings them, in all their parts, to fulfilment" (E. F. Scott, "Moffatt Commentary," *Ephesians*, p. 160). Not yet complete or perfect, it is, because of Christ's indwelling, perpetually growing and being

enriched as it progresses towards integration and maturity. This theme is developed in ii and iii, culminating in the picture of a living structure in which God is present and through which He can manifest Himself (iii. 14-21). Eph. iv returns to Paul's great principle of unity in difference (as in 1 Cor. xii): it ends in a realistic portrayal of THE ACTUAL CHURCH as consisting of "ordinary" men and women, many of whom have been (as some still are) guilty of commonplace faults or even crimes, but who have responded at least in some degree to the redeeming grace and moral challenge of Christ, and thus are among those "that are being saved" (p. 257). Eph. iv. 17-22 is still the effective reply to those who say that they will have nothing to do with Churches because of the inconsistencies of Christians—forgetting that these Christians, who are "no better than other people," might have been infinitely worse but for the love of Christ and the fellowship of the Church. Eph. iii. 9-12, sets forth the vocation of the Church, which is not merely to seek the religious satisfaction of its members but to make known to all men the wisdom, power and love of God. 1 Cor. iii. 16 and 2 Cor. vi. 16 are parallels to Eph. ii. 21-2.

(a) Doctrinal differences separate the Churches less than differences concerning the significance and administration of SACRAMENTS (see p. 257) and the ordination and authority of ministers. Thus, for example, upholders of varying and often complementary theories of the Atonement, as distinguished from a common faith in God's forgiving and restoring grace (cf. p. 244), are found within most Churches. The reason why one Church remains apart from another on grounds connected with the Ministry and the Sacraments is fundamentally that all desire to make sure that these channels of the grace of God are preserved in purity and in continuity with Jesus Christ Himself and with

the Church of Pentecost (cf. Eph. ii. 20). Some Churches lay greater stress than others upon external order as a safeguard, while not failing to insist that the grace of God and the faith of men are the vital elements. Others stress the self-authenticating inward witness of the Spirit of God, "bearing witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom. viii. 16; cf. 1 John v. 9-10), but these Churches by no means neglect the proper ordering of "the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments." The Church of Rome recognises seven sacraments (including, for example, confession and extreme unction): among Protestant Churches practically all regard the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as those specially ordained by Jesus Christ. Of these two Baptism duly administered in one Church is accepted in others: inter-celebration and inter-communion, however, are not yet authorised as general practices between episcopal and non-episcopal churches, nor are the ministries of the two mutually recognised as interchangeable, but much common thought and prayer is being devoted to these great matters and in many lands there is a definite endeavour to bring about a United Church.

On BAPTISM, see pp. 257 *f*. The "word" in Eph. v. 26 and the "answer of a good conscience" in 1 Pet. iii. 21 probably refer to the confessional utterances at the time of baptism, e.g. the formula "in the name of Jesus," or the confession "Jesus is Lord" (p. 251), which meant that the rite was far more than the performance of an external ceremony. It soon became the rule that candidates for admission by baptism to membership of the Church should receive instruction in the Christian Faith and Way before being baptised, and still later catechisms were formulated as a basis of instruction.

On THE LORD'S SUPPER and its relation to "the breaking of bread" and the *agapé* (love-feast), see p. 258.

1 Cor. xi. 23-7 is chronologically the earliest account of the institution and form of the Lord's Supper, but Paul is careful to say in the most solemn terms (1 Cor. xi. 23) that he is not putting forward anything which he has originated or which has any less authority than that of the Lord Himself, just as in 1 Cor. xi. 28-9 he utters a solemn warning against insincerity or casualness in partaking of the Supper. The whole passage (1 Cor. xi. 17-34) is written in order to deal with disorderliness in celebrating the Lord's Supper at Corinth. To questions about participation in public festivals or social meals where meat previously offered in sacrifice at idol-temples may be on the table (cf. p. 193), Paul replies that it may be wise to abstain altogether from such festivals and meals (1 Cor. x. 16-21). Then, pointing the contrast with the Lord's Supper, he says that sacramental living (the hallowing of all experience as an offering of the whole life to God and the realisation that God can manifest Himself to us in all aspects of our life) demands not only sacramental worship but the avoidance of all that conflicts with the Lordship of Christ and our fellowship with Him at all times.

Only the primitive form of THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY (see p. 204) is described in the New Testament because, as far as we have evidence, it was not till the second century that the threefold ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons became the accepted and practically universal order.

The primacy of the Apostles as first-hand witnesses to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus was recognised from the first (Acts i. 8, 21-2), and Paul bases his claim to apostleship on the fact that he had "seen Jesus our Lord" (1 Cor. ix. 1). Officers were appointed to relieve the Apostles by "serving tables" (administering the common resources among the needy members of the Church), but though Acts vi. 2-6 is usually

regarded as the institution of the order of DEACONS they are not specifically called such, and the word actually comes from Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8-12. (In Rom. xvi. 1 "servant" is literally "deaconess.") Paul appointed ELDERS (*presbuteroi*, from which ultimately the word priest is derived) and BISHOPS (*Episcopoi*, overseers, Phil. i. 1 and in the Pastoral Epistles only) as need arose for the continued pastoral care and supervision of Churches which he had established (Acts xiv. 23, xx. 17; cf. Tit. i. 5). In the New Testament the terms appear interchangeable and the office local. The word "elder" appears before Paul embarked upon his mission (e.g. Acts xi. 30). The other kinds of ministry mentioned in 1 Cor. xii. 4-11 and Eph. iv. 11-13 were evidently the spontaneous exercise of gifts naturally found in any spiritual community and exercised in the more informal gatherings of the Churches to-day, but individuals endowed with them were definitely recognised as ministers. Among these PROPHETS (i.e. preachers) and TEACHERS appear to have been the most important and stable, perhaps devoting themselves solely to the work, whereas those with other gifts continued in their ordinary occupations.

V. DEVELOPMENT IN THE EARLY CHURCH

This section of the *Syllabus* deals with material which has to a great extent been covered in the foregoing pages. Furthermore the very full outline of the alternative special course on *The Christian Faith* (*Syllabus*, pp. 92-107) provides sufficient comment for the relatively brief treatment contemplated in this part of the main Course.

VI. UNTO ALL THE WORLD

It would be impossible within the scope of this *Handbook* to supply historical and biographical notes on all the periods and personalities mentioned in the

Syllabus. In addition, however, to the books mentioned on pp. 262 *f.* and in the *Syllabus*, pp. 148-9, the following series of twopenny biographies may be found useful: Eagle Books (Edinburgh House Press), Little Books on Religion (S.P.C.K.), The Children's Library of the Saints (Mowbray).

The Special Courses

While Conrad Skinner's *Concerning the Bible* can be used for the course on "The People and the Book" (*Syllabus*, pp. 85-92), there is no one equally suitable book available for use with the course on "The Christian Faith" (*Syllabus*, pp. 92-107). Carefully chosen suggestions are made in the *Syllabus*, pp. 149-50. To these may be added Nathaniel Micklem's *The Creed of a Christian* (S.C.M. Press, 5s.). Much in the *Handbook* notes on the New Testament parts of the *Syllabus* will be found relevant: any fuller exposition of the Course would necessarily be too long for inclusion here.

Methods of Teaching

This is not a book of method. Teachers' professional training and experience should tell them how to handle their material. Little has been written about special method in the teaching of Scripture, but much in those used for teaching History, Geography and Literature is of course applicable.

Among particularly useful books are Dr. Helen Wodehouse's *Scripture Teaching in the Elementary School* (S.C.M. Press, 2s.), Mr. Geoffrey Heawood's *Religion in School* (S.C.M. Press, 7s. 6d.), and Mrs. Hughes' *Scripture Teaching To-day* (S.C.M. Press, 5s.), while the Institute of Christian Education (49 Gordon Square, W.C.1) is always ready to obtain expert answers to questions about books, teaching methods, and so forth, for enquirers.

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Limits of space have necessitated severe condensation, and many entries referring to place names, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin words, notable men and women other than those mentioned in the Bible itself, classical authors and so forth have had to be grouped under one heading in each case. These are starred. References to books appear under the names of their authors.

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